the
Central Voice
CENTRAL PA'S LGBT NEWS SOURCE

ALLISON HILL:
Helicoptors & helpers
PG. 24-25

FAB FEST:
Oh, what a night!
PG. 16

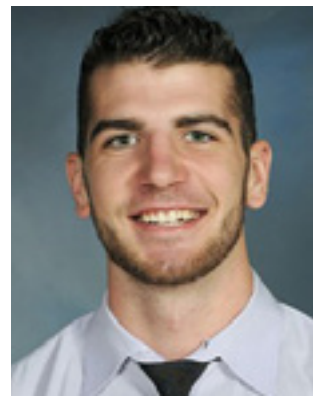
THECENTRALVOICE.COM | JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2018 | **FREE**

Trent Bauer struttin' his stuff on "The Ellen Show." -Youtube

Shippensburg U. senior shows Ellen he can dance

Ellen's TV audience learns there's a lot more to this guy than his moves

By Central Voice



Trent Bauer

Shippensburg University senior Trent Bauer now knows the power of media.

Last October Bauer did a "White Men Can Dance" segment on Ellen DeGeneres – and then received a $10,000 check for his selfless volunteer work.

Bauer didn't know that his friend Steph had written to Ellen telling her that he was the "most selfless and special" people she knew. She also explained that Bauer was dedicated to LGBT activism at his school.

He serves as the university's first LGBT student coordinator. "I wrote to the president [of the school] and asked them to create [the position]." According to

Please see **SHIPPENSBURG SENIOR**, page **11**

THE THREAT FROM WITHIN

There are formidable threats to LGBTQ safety and civil rights from outside our community. Are there also formidable threats to our safety from within our own community?

A disturbing look at intimate partner violence

By Louie Marven

One outside threat is the Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission case now before the US Supreme court. Jack Phillips, the baker who refused to make a cake for David Mullins and Charlie Craig in 2012, argues he should be allowed to discriminate against LGBTQ people as an expression of religious freedom. His argument is dangerous and ugly, and threatens to undermine many of the recently hard-earned victories against discrimination.

Villains outside our community are easy to express outrage toward.

It is more difficult to look inside our own communities and networks to identify how we may cause harm to each other. How do we turn away from that harm toward creating healing queer communities?

A recent, called "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and HIV-affected Intimate Partner Violence in 2016," allows us to jump into that conversation.

The report is an analysis of more than 2,000 reports of intimate partner violence collected by 14 member programs of the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP).

It seeks to describe the violence experienced by LGBTQ and HIV-affected communities in the fourteen geographic regions represented, from Los Angeles to Kansas City to Burlington. It should not be understood as a count of the totality of intimate partner violence taking place in LGBTQ and HIV-affected communities across the US.

That being said, even the raw counts of incident reports in each program should be understood as the tip of the iceberg for the regions served. Many survivors of intimate partner violence may not feel comfortable disclosing their traumatic experiences,

Please see **THREAT FROM WITHIN**, page **18**

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INTERNATIONAL

URAGUAY

1ST TRANS SENATOR BOLSTERS RIGHTS

A veteran trailblazer for LGBT rights, she helped draft a bill that legalised same-sex marriage in 2013 and became the first transgender person to go to university in Uruguay. Most transgender women in Uruguay, a small South American nation of 3.5 million people, don't get to live that long. "In Uruguay, a citizen has a life expectancy of more than 70 years but trans women have a life expectancy of 35," said Suarez, who took her seat in the senate in October. Put down by society and shunned by their families, many transgender people are forced to drop out of school and find it difficult to get a job and access health services. To survive, many end up on the streets as sex workers where they face violence, Suarez said. "Trans women sex workers are exposed to many situations of violence .. they face an enormous amount of aggression," Suarez said.

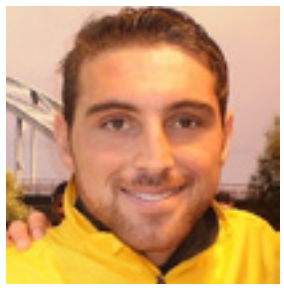
TAJIKISTAN

RISING GLOBAL LGBT CRACKDOWN

By late October, a government journal in the former Soviet republic of Tajikistan announced that the country's interior ministry had compiled a registry of "proven" gays and lesbians, reports Max Bearak for *The Washington Post*. The list named 319 men and 48 women, whom Tajik federal prosecutors identified in operations they called "Morality" and "Purge." A purge — likely in the form of mass incarcerations — is exactly what human rights organizations are afraid will happen. But the phenomenon would not be unique to Tajikistan: Over the past few months, police in Egypt, Azerbaijan, Tanzania, Indonesia and the Russian republic of Chechnya have rounded up people suspected of being gay — and in many cases tortured or publicly humiliated them. "There are a lot of ways in which these crackdowns follow the same sequence of events," said Kyle Knight, a researcher on LGBT rights at Human Rights Watch. "And there's reason to believe that what's happening in Tajikistan now is based on things their government there has learned from, say, what Azerbaijan just did."

GEORGIA

8 ARRESTS OVER GAY RIGHTS



The nationalist Georgian March group wanted defender Guram Kashia punished for wearing a rainbow armband while captaining Dutch club Vitesse Arnhem earlier this month, as part of a broader initiative in the Netherlands for the country›s "Coming Out Day."

Dozens of protesters gathered outside the Georgian Football Federation headquarters late Tuesday, shouting anti-gay slogans while letting off flares and smoke bombs. They also burned a rainbow flag. Police said eight people were detained for resisting police and minor hooliganism.

KENYA

LIONS UPSET KENYAN LEADER

A Kenyan government official wants to send two gay lions for conversion therapy. Two male lions made a splash in the country this week after having sex in front of a wildlife photographer. The lions, who live in Kenya's Maasai Mara National Reserve, were photographed by Paul Goldstein. Goldstein captured the scene as one lion gently mounted the other. He said: "When lions mate, it normally last a few seconds.

"These two were at it for over a minute. The obvious affection afterwards was very evident, as opposed to the violent withdrawal when male and female mate."

But the news has not gone down well with Ezekiel Mutua, the head of the government-backed Kenya Film Classification Board Mutua, who has expressed his "revulsion" to homosexuality in humans previously, did not like it on display in the animal kingdom. Speaking to Nairobi News he suggested that the lions should go for "counselling" to cure their sexuality.

TURKEY

ANKARA BANS LGBT CINEMA, EXHIBITS

The Turkish capital Ankara has banned the public showing of films and exhibitions related to LGBT issues, the governor's office citing risks to public safety.

The move is likely to deepen concern among rights activists and Turkey's Western allies about its record on civil liberties under President Tayyip Erdogan's Islamist-rooted AK Party.

"Starting from Nov. 18, 2017, concerning our community's public sensitivity, any events such as LGBT... cinema, theater, panels, interviews, exhibitions are banned until further notice in our province to provide peace and security," the governor's office said in a statement.

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

LAWYERS PETITION INTERNATIONAL COURT

The City University of New York School of Law has teamed up with Madre, a New York-based women's rights group, and the Organization for Women's Freedom in Iraq to petition the International Criminal Court to bring charges against the Islamic State for gender-based persecution. *BuzzFeed's* Lester Feder reports: The ICC is not obligated to take up these charges, but if Bensouda were to convinced to do so, they would be the first criminal cases for LGBT persecution before an international tribunal. The ICC prosecutor has been considering bringing charges against ISIS fighters for a wide range of crimes, but not yet moved forward because neither Syria nor Iraq are signatories to the treaty that gives the court jurisdiction. In 2015, Bensouda said she might consider bringing charges against foreign fighters who joined ISIS from countries that are party to the treaty, however, including the UK, Germany, Belgium, and Jordan.

RUSSIA

'TRADITIONAL VALUES' ATTACKS OK

Graeme Reid, director of the LGBT Rights Program at Human Rights Watch, published an article on "traditional values" as "a potent weapon against LGBT rights" in countries that were formerly part of the Soviet Union. Reid wrotes: The regional leaders' rhetoric and their modus operandi show that these events are linked by a discourse on "traditional values" that situates LGBT people as the aberrant "other." The idea of a timeless, unchanging tradition is particularly powerful in these times of social uncertainty, political instability, and economic pressure. Reid notes that Russia's anti-gay "propaganda" law has been discussed in many other countries, "leading to an increase in public discourse on 'traditional values' as a way to sabotage the rights of LGBT people throughout the region."

EGYPT

ANTI-LGBT CRACKDOWN

Antoun Issa, senior editor at the Middle East Institute, wrote at *Huffington Post* about the politics behind Egypt's anti-LGBT crackdown.

Issa wrote: All of Egypt's anti-LGBT campaigns are repetitive in content and application. Government, media, and religious bodies coordinate efforts to publicly expose and humiliate LGBT citizens, raids are made on LGBT-friendly venues, while authorities emphasize their moral justification in the crackdown. And they almost always serve a political purpose—this time is no exception. In Egypt's current climate, the targeting of the LGBT community is part of a wider crackdown on political activism and civil society that has been ongoing under President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. On the broader scale, the persecution of Egypt's LGBT community is a rule out of an old playbook among Arab regimes: espouse a conservative social policy, particularly on matters of gender and sexuality, to appease Islamic sensibilities and maintain "religious" legitimacy.

POLAND

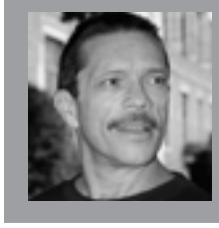
RALLY CALLS FOR 'ISLAMIC HOLOCAUST'

The eighth annual independence day rally organized by far-right nationalists drew 60,000 people, including representatives of "Neo-Nazi, white nationalist, and racist groups," Newsweek reported. The National Radical Camp, which organized the rally, "has told its followers on social media that the Syrian migration is part of a conspiracy between Jewish financiers and Communists to destroy the European Union with Islam, Sharia law and homosexuality," reports Newsweek. "The group considers itself the new version of a movement with the same name in the 1930s that tried to drive out Jews from Poland years before the Holocaust started." Among the banners and chants were "White Europe," "Clean Blood," "Europe Will Be White," "Pray or Islamic Holocaust," and "We Want God." "Supporters of the country's governing conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party took part in the annual march," reported the BBC, which noted that Interior Minister Mariusz Blaszczak called the gathering a "beautiful sight." It said the event also drew about 2,000 anti-fascist counter-demonstrators.

Please see **POLITICAL UPDATES**, page **6**

‘Family Values’ score card

Publisher's Voice



By Frank Pizzoli

Now you know what it’s like to have someone invade your private life as if who you love or bang matters.

Last issue I asked, *Is there an American Taliban?*

This issue I ask, *Why do so many anti-gay, religious right-wing, Republican Family Values politicians torture themselves by staying in the closet?*

Recently, Ohio state legislator Wes Goodman (R) resigned after admitting he was busted having sex with a man in his office, Bil Browning reported in LGBT Nation. The married conservative Ohio state lawmaker was known for his anti-LGBTQ stances.

House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger (R) said he met with Goodman after learning of the allegations and the now-former representative admitted to having consensual sex with the man in his office. Goodman resigned after the meeting citing “inappropriate conduct.” No charges of sexual harassment will be brought since the sex was consensual and the man was not a staffer or legislator.

“We all bring our own struggles and our own trials into public life. That has been true for me, and I sincerely regret that my actions and choices have kept me from serving my constituents and our state in a way that reflects the best ideals of public service,” Goodman said. He also asked “for privacy for myself, my family, and my friends.”

I’m not sure he deserves privacy. Nor does he deserve to be hounded. He should be treated as ‘news’ given his anti-gay policies which he doesn’t himself follow.

The point is legislator Goodman: Now you know what it’s like to have someone invade your private life as if who you love or bang matters. It doesn’t, although no one should do it in the workplace, especially when that workplace is paid for by taxpayer dollars. Especially when some of those taxpayer dollars come from the very citizens you worked so ardently to oppress. How’s it feel?

On Twitter, Goodman described himself as “Christian. American. Conservative. Republican.” You forgot Weasel, Mr. Goodman.

These forced out of the closet events are not new.

In 2015, parent Jennifer Kish came forward with accusations against the anti-gay Michigan pastor who was outed for his efforts to hook-up with men on Grindr. The mother claimed the pastor told her gay son he was going to hell, leaving him despondent and suicidal.

Kish was angered over the revelation Matthew Makela, former pastor of St. John’s Lutheran Church and School in Midland, Mich., might be gay. She wasn’t angered because of his sexual orientation, but because of how he treated her son while they were parishioners at his church, reported WNEM-TV at the time.

Kish says her then 17-year-old son Tyler suffered from serious depression and was considering suicide because he was told by Makela he was going to hell because he is gay.

She claims Makela said that if her son was going to hell for being gay, he might as well go to hell for committing suicide.

Makela, a married father of five, resigned as pastor of St. John’s just one day before the website Queerty posted screenshots and text messages of sexually explicit conversations between the pastor and other men on the gay hook-up app Grindr.

Queerty says it outed Makela because of his record of disparaging the LGBT community, decrying same-sex marriage and for stating that the “transgender movement is going to assist opportunistic sickos in preying upon children and others.”

Maekla sounds like Alabama Senate candidate Roy Moore who is blaming his political troubles on “the gay” rather than his own pining for underage females. I wonder if Maekla starts meetings with a prayer?

Former Oklahoma state Sen. Ralph Shortey, *The Washington Post* reports, recently reached a plea deal with federal prosecutors after investigators uncovered a secret life they say involved child pornography and a rendezvous with a 17-year-old boy he met on Craigslist’s personal ads.

Shortey, a Republican who resigned last spring amid allegations that he had solicited sex from the teen, plead guilty to a child sex trafficking charge, his attorney, Ed Blau, said. Prosecutors dropped three child pornography charges as part of his plea deal.

“After looking at all the evidence and case law and statues and everything else, we just felt that this would give him the best opportunity to come out with the best outcome possible,” Blau told *The Washington Post.* “It would’ve been an extraordinarily difficult case to win a trial.”

It’s also an extraordinarily difficult case to stomach. He served as a county-level campaign coordinator for President Trump. He was known as a ‘family values’ kind of guy.

I’m not a Christian but I sincerely offer you a quote from your Bible, John 8:23: Look in your mirror, be honest “and the truth will set you free”.

1 in 4 say ‘criminal’

PHOTOGRAPH: JOE MARQUETTE/BLOOMBERG/GETTY IMAGES

A major survey across 77 countries and territories finds that 28% of respondents – including 17% of participants in the UK – say those in same-sex relationships “should be charged as criminals”.

On average, 19% of participants in North America, South America and western Europe said people engaging in homosexual relationships should be criminalised.

However, there were major divisions in attitudes towards the criminalisation of those engaging in same-sex relationships when broken down across regions, the 2017 Ilga-Riwi global attitudes survey to sexual and gender minorities found.

Almost half of respondents (45%) in the 15 African countries surveyed said those who have same-sex relationships should be charged as criminals, a sentiment shared by 36% of respondents in the Middle East.

At the other end of the spectrum, 15% of respondents from Australia and New Zealand said they agreed with this sentiment, along with 19% of participants in North America (the US and Canada combined), South America and western Europe.

the Central Voice

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Rainbows in the voting booth: LGBT election round-up

By Central Voice

Forty years ago, Harvey Milk became one of the first openly gay officials in the United States in 1977, when he was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Tragically, he was killed the following year. Four decades later, LGBT political candidates are all over the map of the United States.

The mid-term Nov. 7 General Elections nationwide ushered in even more gay candidates.

Local

Locally, Harrisburg's Ben Allatt was elected to a second term on Harrisburg City Council. Former Harrisburg City Council member Dan Miller was formally installed as Treasurer after being appointed to fill the vacated seat. Chris Dietz was re-elected to a term on Millersburg Borough Council.

Statewide

Sean Strub was elected mayor of Milford, PA, after being appointed to serve an unexpired term.

Erie School Board candidate Tyler Titus is now the first openly transgender person elected to office in Pennsylvania.

Nationwide

Nationwide, LPAC, a national lesbian political action committee that supports candidates, saw many of their candidates elected.

Phil Murphy, for Governor of New Jersey: The former Ambassador to Germany, Murphy is committed to restoring New Jersey's place as a state that stands for progressive values and is a strong champion of women's and LGBTQ equality

Danica Roem, VA House of Delegates, District 13: A journalist and news reporter who was born and raised in Manassas, Roem is the first transgender elected official in Virginia.

Elizabeth Guzman, VA House of Delegates, District 31: A public administrator and a social worker, Guzman is an immigrant from Peru who came to the US as a single mother looking for a better future for her oldest daughter. Her top priorities include affordable healthcare, protecting equality for women and the LGBT community, and transportation issues.

Jennifer Carroll Foy, VA House of Delegates, District 2: Foy is a woman of color who graduated from the Virginia Military Institute. She enrolled in only the third class of female cadets to attend the historically all-male college.

Kelly Fowler, VA House of Delegates, District 21: Fowler is running against an anti-choice opponent with a long history of also opposing LGBTQ and immigration rights. Her top priorities include increased funding for public schools, sensible gun policy, and strong protections against anti-LGBTQ discrimination in schools and by employers.

Dr. Dawn Adams, VA House of Delegates, District 68: Dr. Adams is a nurse practitioner and has a doctorate degree in nursing. She has worked with the Virginia General Assembly as an advocate and advisor on healthcare. She is openly gay and lives with her partner of 15 years.

Donte Tanner, VA House of Delegates, District 40: Tanner is an Air Force veteran and small business owner. Tanner's top priorities are increasing access to healthcare, protecting a woman's right to choose and make her own healthcare choices, and ending gerrymandering.

Minneapolis city council member Andrea Jenkins was elected the first black transgender lawmaker elected in the U.S.

Ohio Elects 11

Gay and lesbian candidates were elected to city councils in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Newark and Toledo, as 11 of 20 LGBTQ contenders won local offices across Ohio. In all, openly gay and lesbian candidates won more than 340,000 votes. Among the day's winners: Democrat Megan Kilgore was elected city auditor in Columbus with 77 percent of the vote, and Democrat Ryan Messer was the biggest vote-getter in a field of 13 candidates for the Cincinnati Board of Education.

Incumbent city council members Chris Seelbach of Cincinnati, Kerry McCormack of Cleveland, Shannon Hardin of Columbus and Jeremy Blake of Newark all won new terms.

First-time candidates Tamaya Dennard of Cincinnati, Sean Farrell of Newark and Nick Komives of Toledo also won election to their city councils.

Other Ohio results:

Incumbent school board member Patrick Bravo won re-election in Akron.

In suburban Columbus, David Donofrio won election to the Board of Education for South-Western City Schools.

Four openly gay incumbents lost races Tuesday: two-term City Council member Kevin Wadsworth Johnson in Portsmouth; three-term Dayton school board member Joe Lacey; Maple Heights City Council President Richard Trojanski, who was running in the district he represented for two terms; and Matt Boettcher, who was appointed this spring to the Village Council in the Cincinnati suburb of Golf Manor and was seeking a full term.

In Cincinnati, Democrat Lesley Jones and Republican Seth Maney finished out of the running for City Council seats. Renee Hevia lost out on a school board seat by 100 votes, and Hamilton County Municipal Court candidate Darlene Rogers lost her bid.

Erin Upchurch, who ran on a progressive ticket for the Columbus school board, fell less than 500 votes short.

Voice Box

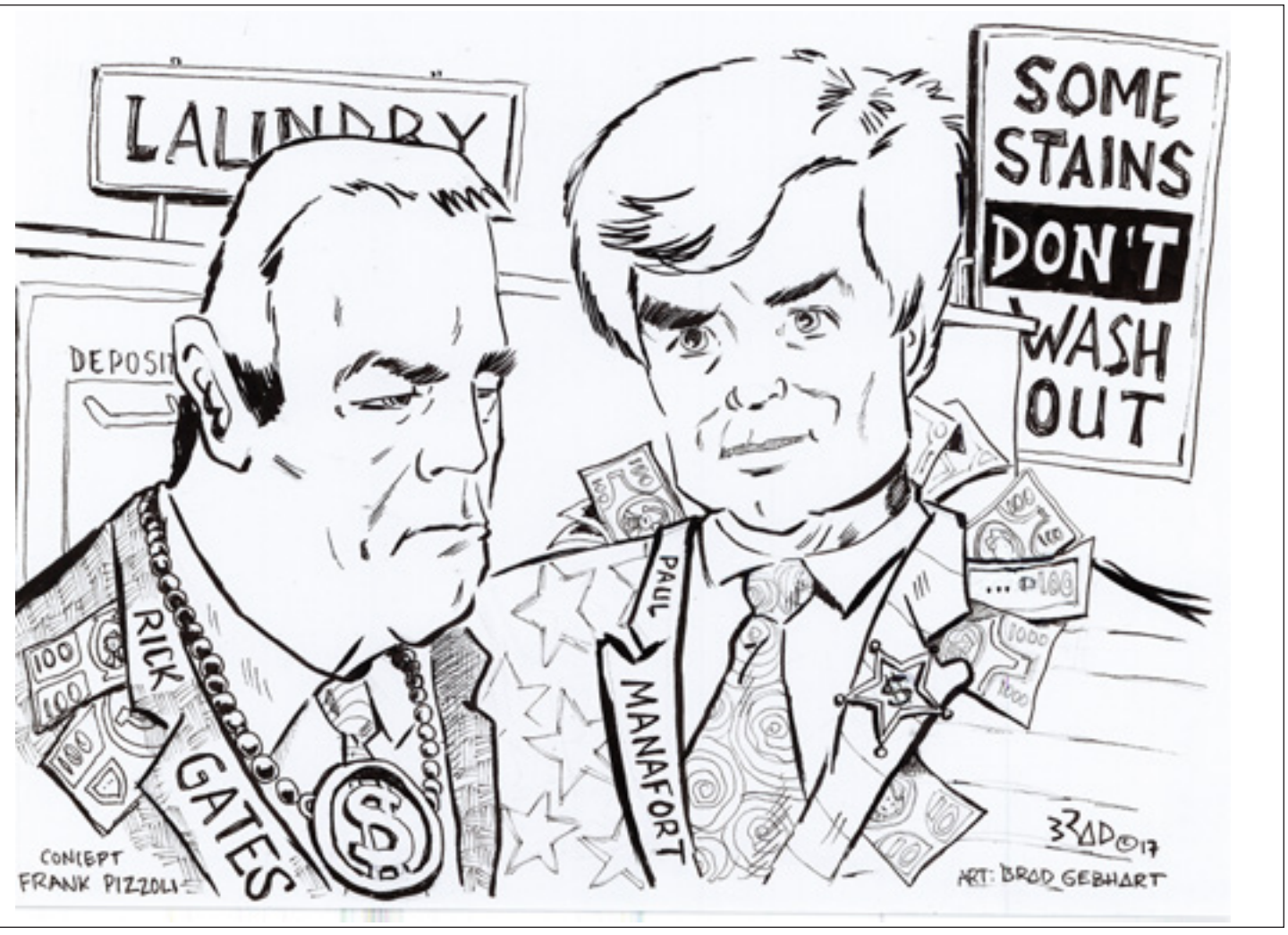
Notes from our readers

E-mail your thoughts to posops@aol.com

TREASURE

The Gay and Lesbian Review arrived. Your interview with Salman Rushdie is superb (excerpted in *Central Voice* Sept-Oct 2017). I'm not sure our community realizes the literary treasure we have living amongst us. Kudos on the piece.

John Francis, reader



Political Updates From page 3

SURINAME

ACTION URGE DESPITE RELIGION

Human Rights Watch's Boris Dittrich reports a conversation among parliamentarians and NGOs during Pride month activities. A couple of parliamentarians said in response to questions about changing pension laws to make them fairer to people in same-sex partnerships, saying society is not yet ready for equal rights. Dittrich says: This answer did not sit well with representatives from the many groups that attended, who pointed out that human rights are universal. "LGBT people are humans too!" one person said. Other parliament members chimed in, several making the argument that the first step should be to create public understanding of LGBT issues and tackle religious opposition: "Once we have created broad support then we can legislate," one said. Many fingers in the air to respond, a lively discussion ensued.

ROMANIA

KIM DAVIS MEETS ARCHBISHOPS

American county clerk Kim Davis, who became a Religious Right folk hero for refusing to provide marriage licenses to same-sex couples after the U.S. Supreme Court's marriage equality ruling, recently spent nine days in Romania on a speaking tour designed to drum up support for a referendum to put a man-woman-only definition of marriage in the country's constitution. Davis and Liberty Counsel VP Harry Mihet, who accompanied her on the trip, met with "four out of the six top archbishops of the Orthodox Church" as well as evangelical leaders and the heads of "pro-family" organizations, according to a conversation Mihet had with Liberty Counsel President Mat Staver on his weekly radio show. Mihet said Davis had a "powerful" message about the need to put a restrictive definition of marriage in the constitution to prevent the kind of "judicial activism and judicial overreach" experienced in the U.S., which he said has had a "Devastating" impact on people of faith in the U.S. (Davis has said she plans to run for re-election in 2018; a man denied a marriage license by Davis said he may run against her.)

CAYMEN ISLANDS

ANTI-LGBT DISCRIMINATION PETITION FAILS

Colours Cayman, an LGBT advocacy group, submitted a petition to the European Parliament after efforts to engage British authorities about anti-LGBT discrimination failed. The Cayman Islands are a British Overseas Territory. The petition has been accepted, meaning that the "legal institutions of the European Union will be giving consideration to claims of discrimination. Cayman News Service reports: LGBT people in the UK's Caribbean territories are being discriminated against compared to other British Overseas Territories, where they are enjoying equal rights to same-sex couples. Colours Cayman stated in a release that "the sad reality is that the unwillingness to change with respect to the remaining …territories", which includes Cayman, is as a "result of their bigotry, hidden under the guise of cultural differences".

UNITED KINGDOM

MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE?

The BBC reports on LGBT people from South Asian communities—Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh—who use social media to find people of the opposite sex willing to be part of a marriage of convenience to meet familial and community expectations. While homosexuality is considered a sin in Islam, some imams have said the bigger sin is the deception of being involved in a marriage of convenience.Imam Ajmal Masroor, based in London, said: "I would recommend to those people doing this, do not do two wrongs because two wrongs will not make it right. If you are struggling with your faith, that's your personal journey with God. However, deceiving other people is in itself a moral problem." It is not just Muslims who are turning to these online websites, the BBC has also seen posts from individuals from Sikh and Hindu backgrounds.

NATIONAL

NEW YORK

COUNTY TRANS EMPLOYEES COVERED

New York Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman announced a settlement with the County of Oswego to ensure that transgender county employees and retirees have access to essential health care coverage through their employer-provided health plan. As part of the settlement, the County has agreed to eliminate from its plan a categorical exclusion on expenses related to gender transition; to offer an affirmative benefit for treatments and procedures for gender transition; and to ensure training and compliance with anti-discrimination laws going forward. In June 2017, the Attorney General's Civil Rights Bureau opened an investigation into Oswego County concerning the coverage provided by its health plan. The Attorney General's investigation found that this categorical exclusion violated a number of laws, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and the New York State Human Rights Law, which prohibit employers from discriminating in the provision of benefits based on an employee's gender identity and expression, transgender status, and disability.

CALIFORNIA

1ST WOMAN HEADS SENATE

CA State Sen. Toni Atkins (D-San Diego) is now the Senate president pro tem, the first woman to lead the chamber. State Senate leader Kevin de León said in a statement, "Four years ago, our Caucus elected the first Latino leader in over a century to lead the California State Senate — and Senator Atkins is now our first ever woman to be elected Senate leader. "Given our national divisions, California's example is more important than ever – and I look forward to working with our President pro Tem and all of our colleagues to ensure that the Senate continues to rise together to meet the challenges faced by the great people we represent," Atkins said.

Philadelphia man wins discrimination case against cabby

Taxi company found guilty eight years after Mark Seaman was kicked out of a cab for kissing his partner

by Brandon Voss

Good thing the meter wasn't still running.

A taxi dispatch company has been found guilty of discriminating against former passenger Mark Seaman, 34, in December 2009, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* reports.

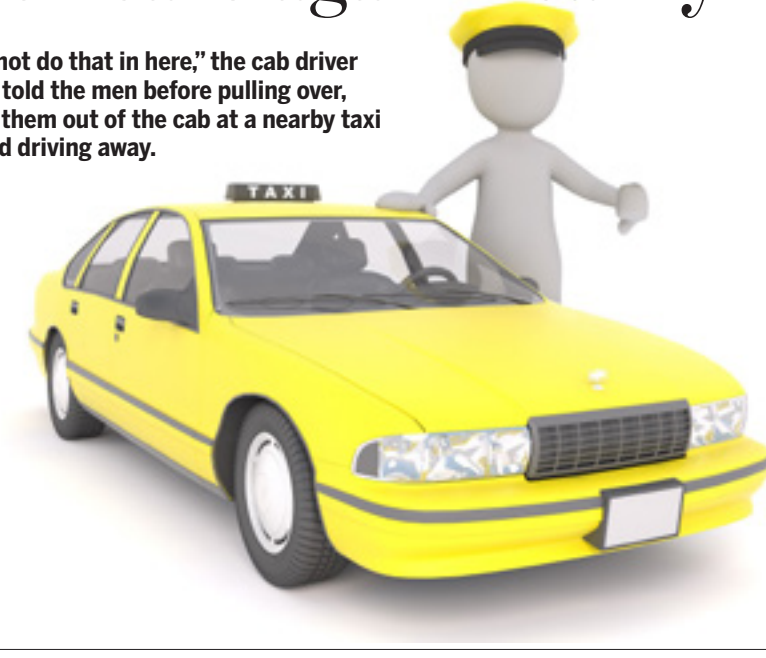
The victory comes eight years after Seaman gave his partner a brief kiss on the top of the head as their cab left from Philadelphia International Airport.

"You cannot do that in here," the driver allegedly told the men before pulling over, throwing them out of the cab at a nearby taxi stand, and driving away. "I just remember thinking, 'Gee, what a nice welcome home to Philadelphia,'" Seaman says.

Seaman filed a discrimination complaint within a week of the incident.

Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations has finally ruled that PHL Taxi violated the city's non-discrimination law and has ordered the company to pay Seaman $500.

The ruling sets a standard that the city's taxi dispatch companies are responsible for any discriminatory conduct by their drivers. The companies will also be required to educate drivers about the city's policy prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, religion, and sexual orientation.



"You cannot do that in here," the cab driver allegedly told the men before pulling over, throwing them out of the cab at a nearby taxi stand, and driving away.

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LGBT center recognized for model health programs

Adrian Shanker, Executive Director of Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center, accepting award.

In recognition of the development and broad implementation of leading-edge, model health promotion programs to address the severe LGBT tobacco, cancer, HIV, and diabetes disparities, the director of the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health today awarded Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center its 2017 Rural Health Program of the Year award.

Lisa Davis, Director of the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health presented the award, stating, "The rural health program of the year award recognizes an exemplary health program that addresses an identified need in a rural community, uses unique, creative, and innovative approaches ensures access to the community it serves, includes statewide resources as part of the planning and evaluation process, and demonstrates a significant benefit to the target population. Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center has shown dedication to improving health outcomes and reducing disparities in this historically-marginalized and underserved population."

U.S. Congressman Charlie Dent also delivered remarks at the award presentation to congratulate the center for its work. Lehigh County Executive Tom Muller and State Representative Steve Samuelson were also in attendance.

In accepting the award, Adrian Shanker, Executive Director of Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center said "For rural LGBT people, the struggle is real when it comes to moving beyond stigma to access LGBT-affirming care. That's why we are intentional about reaching rural LGBT communities with our campaigns and why I am so honored that Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center has been selected to receive this award from the Pennsylvania Office of Rural Health.

Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center provides arts, health, and youth programs for the LGBT community across the Greater Lehigh Valley.

Info: bradburysullivancenter.org

AIDS: Undetectable=Untransmissable

The fact that people infected with HIV who are virally suppressed cannot sexually transmit the virus to others is now accepted in the HIV/AIDS community as a result of accumulating evidence since the early 2000s. In early 2016, the Undetectable=Untransmissable (U=U) slogan was launched by the Prevention Access Campaign to promote the finding. The campaign has been rapidly gathering momentum, having been endorsed by more than 400 organisations from 60 different countries since its launch. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) joined the movement by endorsing the science in a letter released on National Gay Men›s HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

Alder Health enjoys new digs

Alder Health Services enjoys new digs at 100 S. Cameron St., Harrisburg. The LGBT Health, HIV, and Mental Health agency's popular Wall of Heroes, a curated collection of photographs of recent history's movers and shapers, is viewable on the agency's public-area hallways. Shown here: Browne, third from the left, with board members and guests at an open house.

Nobel Prize-winning author Kazuo Ishiguro giving his acceptance speech

Are you optimistic about the future?

By Central Voice

Are you optimisitc about the future? Pessimistic? Dare you have hope?

Perhaps Kazuo Ishiguro can provide perspective. He won The Nobel Prize in Literature for 2017 because, as the Academy said about him: "in novels of great emotional force, has uncovered the abyss beneath our illusory sense of connection with the world." His next work will be about Artificial Intelligence.

Dec. 7 Ishiguro delivered his acceptance entitled My Twentieth Century Evening and Other Small Breakthroughs.

He said: "So here I am, a man in my sixties, rubbing my eyes and trying to discern the outlines, out there in the mist, to this world I didn't suspect even existed until yesterday. Can I, a tired author, from an intellectually tired generation, now find the energy to look at this unfamiliar place? Do I have something left that might help to provide perspective, to bring emotional layers to the arguments, fights and wars that will come as societies struggle to adjust to huge changes?

"I'll have to carry on and do the best I can. Because I still believe that literature is important, and will be particularly so as we cross this difficult terrain. But I'll be looking to the writers from the younger generations to inspire and lead us. This is their era, and they will have the knowledge and instinct about it that I will lack. In the worlds of books, cinema, TV and theatre I see today adventurous, exciting talents: women and men in their forties, thirties and twenties. So I am optimistic. Why shouldn't I be?"

Abstinence-only programs fail

Enthusiasm for abstinence-only-until-marriage approaches have also dealt a blow to sex education, family planning programs and HIV prevention efforts. Between 2002 and 2014, the percentage of U.S. schools that require students to learn about human sexuality fell from 67 percent to 48 percent and requirements for HIV prevention fell from 64 percent to 41 percent.

The researchers note that in the mid-1990s, 81 percent of adolescent males and 87 percent of adolescent females got formal instruction on birth control methods. That fell to 55 percent of young men and 60 percent of young women by 2011-2013.

Leslie Kantor, PhD, MPH says, "Young people have a right to sex education that gives them the information and skills they need to stay safe and healthy.... Withholding critical health information from young people is a violation of their rights. Abstinence-only-until-marriage programs leave all young people unprepared and are particularly harmful to young people who are sexually active, who are LGBTQ, or have experienced sexual abuse."

The United States Congress has spent more than $2 billion on domestic abstinence-only programs between 1982 and 2017, and another $1.4 billion on abstinence-only-until-marriage in foreign aid for HIV prevention. Current guidelines prohibit U.S. states from using funds to educate teens about birth control except to talk about their failure rates.

"Abstinence-only-until marriage as a basis for health policy and programs should be abandoned," Santell said

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Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce

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Fighting white supremacy

"Institutionalized racism is a term we must all better understand," SPEAKER said Dec. 2 when about 100 people gathered on the steps of the State Capitol for four hours to address issues around 'white supremacy'. Attendees were a combination of local residents and visitors. The event was sponsored by Harrisburg Rising and Real Progressives.

SHIPPENSBURG SENIOR:

Unexpected gift on Ellen DeGeneres show

From page 1

Huffington Post, Bauer nervously told DeGeneres once he was seated across from her, "As a student of the LGBT community, I felt there was a... lack of resources. So, I wrote them and asked if I could do some research to develop a center on campus and...we're kind of in the process of doing that, so I'm really excited."

Bauer, who wants to join the Peace Corps after graduation, had a surprise coming. Ellen presented him with a $10,000 to help him pay back his college loans.

Central Voice caught up with Bauer, the 22-year-old university senior majoring in Business Management.

Central Voice: Why south central Pennsylvania?

Trent Bauer: I came to Shippensburg on a scholarship to play basketball. I retired after two years to run for the vice president of the student body. I was elected and served for an additional year and a half.

CV: You're a 'go getter' who likes business?

TB: I enjoy staying active, being incredibly busy, and making a difference. I have been watching Ellen for as long as I can remember! My parents always watched it with us growing up because they loved her message and wanted to teach us the importance of being kind.

CV: Your parents' idea took roots with the campus LTGT group you founded?

TB: I chose to start this organization for many reasons, but the most important reason, a personal one, is I wanted to create something that would have made freshman year 'me' feel safe and confident.

CV: Please tell us more.

TB: Being from a small town and then going to school in an even smaller town, being gay isn't exactly the easiest thing. Add that to being on a sports team and you have a recipe for disaster. There also aren't any resources for LGBTQ+ students here so finding out who I am became increasingly harder.

CV: The experience of starting the campus LGBT group taught you...

TB: It has been so unbelievably overwhelming in the best way possible. I have received support from literally across the world. There are so many wonderful staff and faculty members here that support this journey. I also was blown away by the support from the students. I never imagined that so many students would want to help even though they don't necessarily identify.

CV: What advice do you have for others interested in any LGBT or any kind of advocacy?

TB: I have two sayings that have gotten me through tough times. One is that "it is worth it." There have been many times where I have fought and fought to only move forward slightly. It can be incredibly deflating, but that small step forward will have a positive impact on someone.

Shippensburg University student Trent Bauer received a $10,000 check from Ellen DeGeneres to help pay his college loans. Youtube

The second thing that keeps me going is a saying from my idol Ellen - "be kind to one another." Often times we get bogged down by the hate in the world. Some people including myself have to experience that hate firsthand, but the amazing thing is that for every act of hate, there are 100 acts of goodness. The work that we do isn't easy, and it isn't always fun, but I truly believe that one day we won't need activism for our community and we can prosper through equality.

"...for every act of hate, there are 100 acts of goodness. "

-Trent Bauer

CV: What is your biggest personal fear?

TB: Failure. I feel as though, even on such a small scale, there are people who are really hopeful that we sparked change here at my university. The last thing I would ever want is to not be able to fulfill my goal and help the students who need it most.

CV: What is your biggest personal joy?

TB: Time with my family. They are my support system and best friends. They have helped me through so much and have managed to turn some of the worst situations into the best. There is never a dull moment when we are together and I hope to always continue to make my family proud.

CV: What is the biggest issue LGBT people face?

TB: I think the biggest issue is a lack of education. I don't believe that young members of the community are properly educated about sexual interactions. I do not think community members are educated about their rights and lack of rights. I think there is a lack of education regarding resources in the area. I think there is a lack of education about incredible leaders like Harvey Milk in society - period. I think there is a large population of people who lack knowledge of anything LGBTQ+ resulting in intolerance and hate.

Why intersectionality matters in the LGBTQ movement

LGBT Community Center

By Amanda Arbour

Audre Lorde famously said: "There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives."

In our work within the LGBTQ+ movement, our focus is on advancing the rights of LGBTQ+ communities - as it should be. But the importance of applying an intersectional perspective is recognizing that not only do we have many different LGBTQ+ communities beneath the rainbow umbrella, but some of our communities hold more power and privilege than others.

The term "intersectionality" was first coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989, when she published a paper articulating how the oppression that Black women face is unique and different from the sexism that white women face and the racism that Black men face. This conclusion was rooted in her analysis of the landmark case DeGraffenreid v. General Motors, in which five Black women sued GM based on both the racialized and gendered segregation of jobs. The court, however, ruled against them - concluding that either racial discrimination OR gender discrimination must be proven, but they could not sue based on both. Since they could not prove that all women or all Black people were being discriminated against, in the eyes of the court they did not have a case.

Fast-forward to 2017, and this compounding of oppressions is the reality that many within our LGBTQ+ communities face. In July the Building Movement Project released a report entitled "Working at the Intersections: LGBTQ Nonprofit Staff and the Racial Leadership Gap". Based on survey responses from over 4,000 nonprofit organizations, the report found that "when it comes to professional advancement, even within explicitly LGBT-focused organizations, LGBT people of color face more challenges compared to their white counterparts or straight people of color."

Systemically across the LGBTQ+ movement our leadership, our priorities and our queer spaces are white, cis, gay and male - further marginalizing queer people of color, trans and non-binary people, bi people and women - not to mention queer immigrants and refugees, queer people with disabilities and queer people who are poor. So we have work to do in making our movement reflective of ALL of our LGBTQ+ communities. We must start by asking ourselves some difficult questions.

In terms of representation, who is at the table when we are making decisions and allocating funds - as Board members, as staff, as committee members? Who is at the mic speaking at our events? Who is leading our efforts?

With regard to planning and programming, is intentional engagement with marginalized LGBTQ+ communities written into our strategic plan? Are issues that impact those who are most marginalized the topic of events and programs that we hold? And are we willing to take our programs out in the community if people don't feel comfortable coming to us?

As for accessibility, how does our physical space welcome or exclude people with disabilities? Can they easily enter and navigate the space, including restrooms? And are our programs inclusive of people with different levels of mental health and neurodiversity?

In terms of language access, who can linguistically access our organizations? Are multi-lingual staff or volunteers readily available to provide services to LGBTQ+ people who speak languages other than English? Are our brochures, flyers and websites available in multiple languages?

Finally, regarding the PR materials that we use, what images are featured on our website, brochures, posters, social media? And how do we employ meaningful symbols - like the #MoreColorMorePride flag with the black and brown stripes - to send a message that we are seeking to be intentionally inclusive?

These are the kinds of questions that we must be willing to ask ourselves if we seek to apply a truly intersectional approach to our work in the LGBTQ+ movement. And we must be willing to take a hard look at ourselves as we seek to answer them. If we don't have the most marginalized folks at our table, how might the table need to change? How can we widen our table to be more inclusive? How can we flatten our table to be less hierarchical?

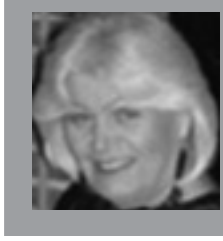
It will take intentional effort to put in place strategies to make ourselves more responsive to and representative of our diverse LGBTQ+ communities - but it must not be seen as something extra, but rather something that is embedded in everything that we do. By choosing to center those who are most marginalized, we will be moving towards more authentic and meaningful work within the LGBTQ+ movement.

Recognizing that our liberation is bound up with one another, we can we start to work together towards removing the systemic barriers so that ALL of our LGBTQ+ communities have the same rights, opportunities and outcomes, and are safe, respected and valued in our community.

Amanda Arbour is executive director of the LGBT Community Center, Harrisburg.

Non-stop assaults continue

Trans Central PA Topics



By Joanne Carroll

Inarguably 2017 has not been a great year for the LGBT community. The assaults on us and our brothers and sisters have been virtually non-stop. We read every day about some action taken by the current occupant at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in DC, or some rollback by his henchmen. That or a legislature in some state enacts a piece of legislation that takes away freedom and justice, or places a burden on our community that no one else faces.

However, there was a bright spot in November as many LGBT individuals were successful in their effort to attain a political office. Mayors, city council members, school board members, and a state legislator succeeded in their elections, and doubtless, they will change the paradigm in their corner of the world.

In addition, another bright note, thanks to Governor Wolf and his cabinet and staff, we have made some clear and distinctive policy gains, many initiated by the LGBT work group, chaired by Dr. Rachel Levine, our Acting Secretary of Health and Physician General.

This should serve as an incentive to us as we head into the 2018 elections and beyond. Our votes as a community matter, and we should rally around those candidates and issues that support our concerns, and will work for the freedom and justice for all persons.

The two-party system has become the oligarchs versus the rest of us. Those richest people in the world have dominated our elective process for far too long. Many in our community put forward the line of reasoning that many of us fail to reach out in a spirit of compromise and good will and that we share the guilt for the brokenness of the system. Wrong! "He that has the gold makes the rules" has been the precedent for far too long. There simply is no reasoning against money! All we have to compete with is our voices and our votes, and none of us should ever sit out because we do not like the choices. When in doubt, go with the candidate or issue that will help each of us achieve the full citizenship we deserve.

May you be richly blessed in this New Year!

Joanne Carroll is the current President of TransCentral PA. TransCentral PA is committed to providing advocacy and caring support for transgender individuals, their significant others, families, friends and allies.

NYC transportation goes gender-neutral

The New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority recently nixed the phrase "ladies and gentlemen" in New York City subway and bus announcements and replacing it with gender-inclusive language.

A bulletin was sent to transit staff notifying them of the change, which went into effect immediately. MTA subway conductors and bus drivers have been instructed to use gender-neutral language when communicating, such as "passengers," "riders" and "everyone." Pre-recorded messages that do not comply with the new policy will be updated.

The change is part of a larger effort by the MTA to improve communication with customers, as laid out in the NYC Subway Action Plan. The company is also moving away from pre-recorded messages in favor of more live announcements by the train crew themselves. The announcements will explain delays in real time and be more detailed and personalized. Conductors may even mention nearby landmarks at stops if they choose.

"We're fundamentally changing the way we talk with riders to give them better and clearer information," MTA spokesman Jon Weinstein said.

Other planned changes include launching a new MTA-wide app, introducing new station signage and employee training to improve communication of service changes and alternative options, accelerating the system-wide completion of countdown clock installations and deploying MTA Customer Representatives at high-traffic stations to help customers in real time.

York Equality Fest partnered with Union Lutheran Church for Day of Remembrance

REGION REMEMBERS

Services, capitol vigil mark Transgender Day of Remembrance in midstate

There have now been 24 murders of trans people this year. That is already more than there were in either 2015 or 2016, reports Josh Jackman for *Pink News*.

The latest trans death occurred in late October when the body of Stephanie Montez, 47, was found by the road near Corpus Christi, Texas.

Nov. 20 groups in Harrisburg and York held vigils to honor those murdered during the last year.

In Harrisburg, TransCentralPA, Equality PA, other organizations and private citizens held their annual Transgender Day of Remembrance on the steps of the State Capitol. Those assembled held a candle light vigil in memory of the many transgender persons murdered during the past year.

Speakers included: PA Acting Secretary of Health and Physician General, Dr. Rachel Levine; Representative Dan Frankel, LGBT Caucus Chair; Kell Wilkinson Policy Director, Equality PA; Amanda Arbor, Executive Director, LGBT Community Center of Central Pennsylvania; Joanne Carroll, President, TransCentral PA; and the Rev. John Ward-Diorio, St. Paul's United Church of Christ, Mechanicsburg delivered the homily.

York Equality Fest partnered with Union Lutheran Church in the City of York, PA to hold their first Transgender Day of Remembrance vigil. The Rev. Joel Folkemer of Union Lutheran was joined by out lesbian pastor, Eva O'Diam of Dover United Church of Christ, Rev. Dr. Gabriele Parks from the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of York, and speakers, Charles D. Kress from PFLAG, James Sawor from Rep. Carol Hill-Evans' office, and members of Transology.

Equality Fest President, Carla Christopher performed a poem, Pastor Joel led the congregation in songs, and participants, led by York City mayor-elect Michael Helfrich, West York Borough mayor, Shawn Mauck, and Hallam Borough mayor-elect, Glenn Wascovitch, lit candles as the names were read of those who have died by transgender violence in the U.S. in 2017.

The service was followed by a time of quiet meditation and mutual community support.

The Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) is an annual occurring event held each November 20. It is set aside as a day to memorialize those individuals killed because of transphobia, or the hatred or fear of transgender and gender non-conforming people; and acts to bring attention to the continued violent hate crimes endured by the transgender community.

The Transgender Day of Remembrance was founded in 1998 by Gwendolyn Ann Smith; a transgender woman who is a graphic designer, columnist, and activist, to memorialize the murder of Rita Hester in Allston, Massachusetts on November 28, 1998.

Lancaster is on the move

Matching the stir of recent economic development, the Commonwealth Financing Authority recently approved project grants and loans totaling $12.65 million in Lancaster City.

Grants include –

A $175,000 Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program for Farnum Park renovations

A $1.225 million Multimodal Transportation Fund Program grant for S. Duke St. improvements that include improving ADA accessibility, the addition of a roundabout, street lighting and bike lane construction. This fund provides grants to encourage economic development and ensure that a safe and reliable system of transportation is available

A $2 million Business in Our Sites grant and $3 million Business in Our Sites loan for developing City Gate Corporate Center, projected to create 500 jobs.

EDC Finance Corporation award for a $6.25 million Building PA loan to renovate Hotel Lancaster.

An independent agency of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, the Commonwealth Financing Authority is charged with overseeing the funding of programs and investments in Pennsylvania's economic growth.

Harrisburg Gay Men's Group forms

Want to meet up with guys for Happy Hours and dinner?

So did local gay man Bobby. He started talking up the idea at Central PA Pride Festival last July. Now the group is a reality and is known as The Harrisburg Gay Men's Group. They can be found on Meetup.com.

"I started the group to meet other gay men in the area interested in socializing by going to happy hours or just dining out at different restaurants in the area," Bobby tells Central Voice.

The group met at The Firehouse restaurant in Harrisburg on Oct, 7 and then at Boomerang Bar & Grille, New Cumberland on Nov. 18. Anyone is welcome. Check the web site for upcoming events.

PA LGBT Family Law resource guide

"This new resource will help LGBTQ community members across Pennsylvania understand the steps they can take to protect their families."

The Family Equality Council is making available – for FREE – Pennsylvania LGBTQ Family Law: A Resource Guide for LGBTQ-headed families living in Pennsylvania. Go to - https://form.familyequality.org/pa-lgbtq-family-law-guide

Four Pennsylvanians named "Out 100"

By Jason Landau Goodman

Out Magazine has released the 'Out 100' since 1994, featuring individuals who the publication considers having made compelling contributions to society as out LGBT people.

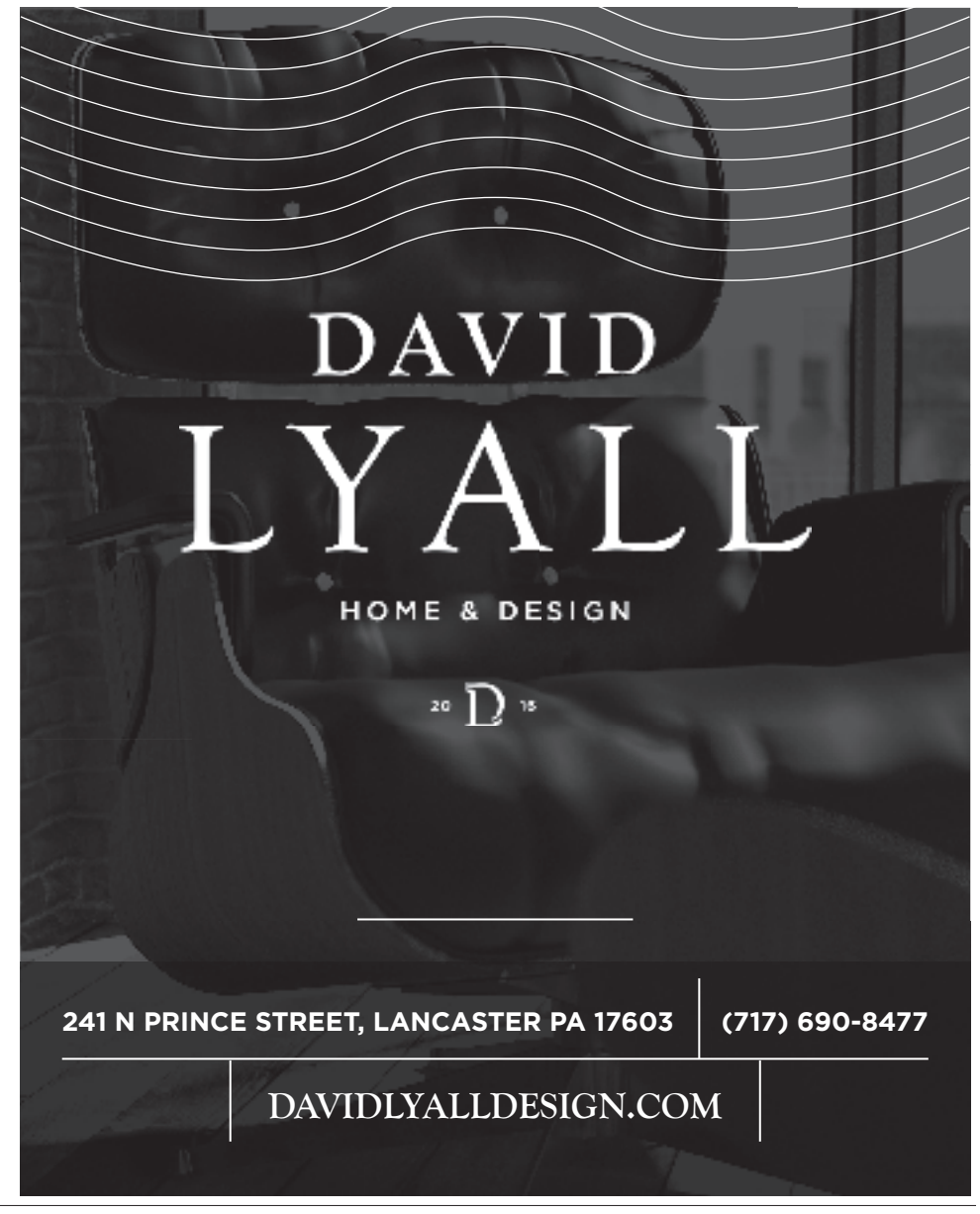
For 2017, four Pennsylvanians — though all who were born and raised in the commonwealth but now live in New York City — have been named to the Out 100 list for 2017:

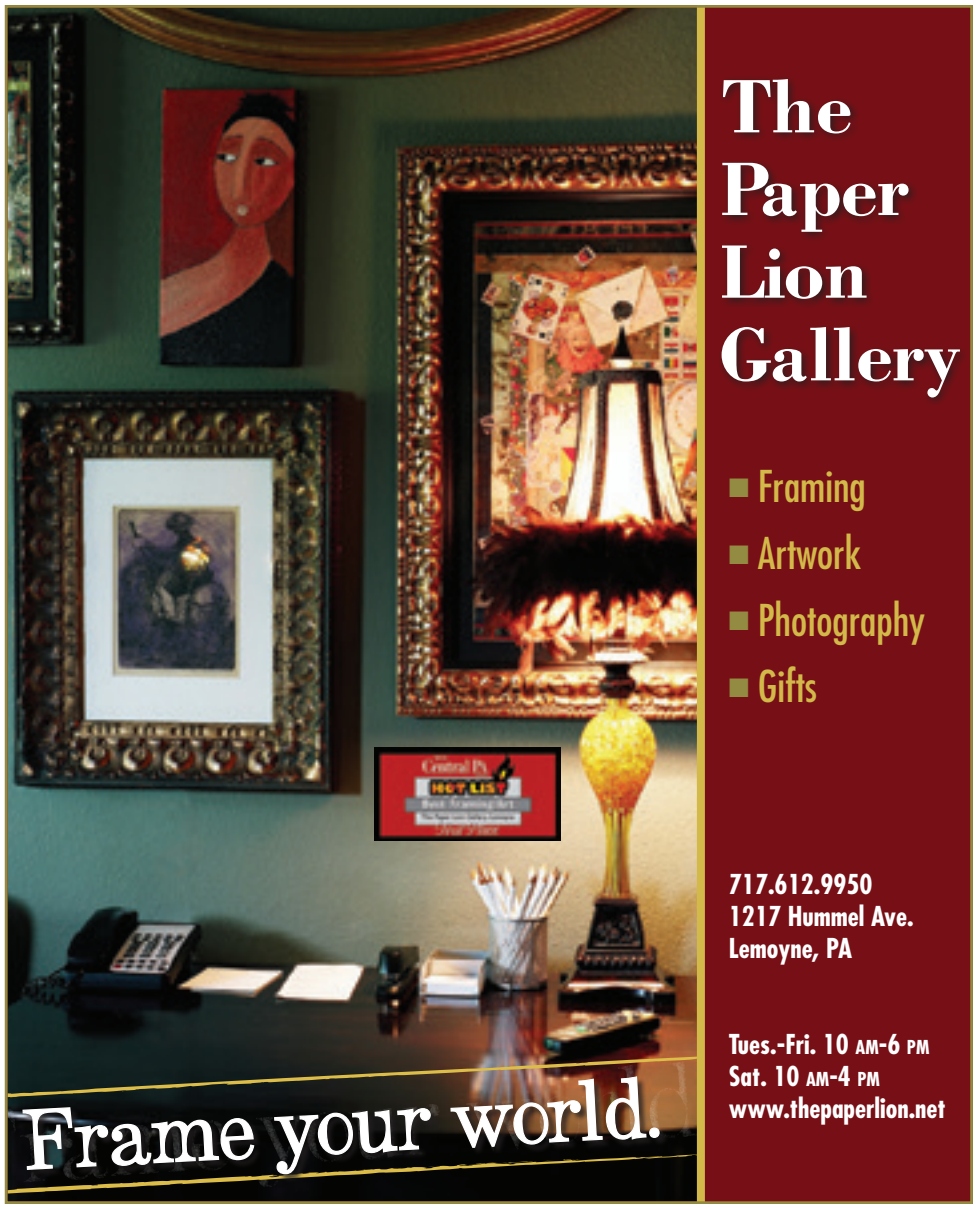
Kyle Abraham, Dancer and Choreographer (From Pittsburgh) Johnathan Groff, Entertainer of the Year (From Lancaster) Chris McCarthy, President of MTV (From Levittown) Benj Pasek, Songwriter (From Lower Merion)

Songwriter Max Vernon and actor Nathan Lee Graham are honored in this year's Out 100, who both performed last year at our 2016 PYC event in New York City.

Additionally, two honorees this year attended schools in Pennsylvania. Playwright Paula Vogel attended Bryn Mawr College and actor Samira Wiley attended Temple University.

Past honorees from Pennsylvania in recent years include Alison Bechdel, Lee Daniels, Edie Windsor, and Evan Wolfson.





Don your kilts and tartans, Bal Masque calls all clans

The Art Association of Harrisburg is calling together the Clans of Central Pennsylvania in the spirit of celebration and good will on Saturday, March 10, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., for a Celtic Ceilidh ("kay-lee"), this year's theme for the 2018 Bal Masque.

The festive evening will be held at Harrisburg Midtown Arts Center (HMAC). Proceeds support Art Association exhibits, education and programming.

The Capital Room, HMAC's turn of the century art deco ballroom, will be transformed into a world of lords and ladies, druids and bards, warriors and witches, plaids, pipes and Celtic knots. The Kitchen @ HMAC will serve an incredible Irish-inspired dinner and dessert buffet and beer and spirits will flow at the cash bar in the VIP mezzanine.

Musician couple, Tom and Laurie Reese, will start off the evening with traditional Irish and Celtic tunes and later, talented dancers from Carraig School of Irish Dance will give a lively performance of intricate footwork. DJ Jonathan Frazier will keep the festive music flowing throughout the evening. Costumed Celts can display their garb in the legendary costume parade – and compete for great prizes and bragging rights! Artist Barbara Passeri Warfel will invite guests to sit for a mini-portrait in charcoal as a special memento of the evening.

Silent and Live auctions are always highlights of the Bal and this year's will include fabulous dining and entertainment experiences, provided or hosted by Art Association Board Members.

Una Martone of Leadership Harrisburg Area, and Shaun Jude McCoach of the Central Penn Business Journal, are giving enthusiastic support as Honorary Chieftains of the Bal. Higher Information Group, the noblest sponsor, is again helping to make the Bal possible.

Three ticketing levels extend The Bal Masque to a wider demographic and expand the benefits of attending: At the $150 level, Lairds & Ladies will enjoy complimentary valet parking, two drink coupons, preferred seating and first access to dinner. At the $100 level, Clanfolk get open seating, cash bar and buffet dinner and dessert. Special pricing of $50 for Outlanders (first-time Bal attendees) and Clan HYP (members of Harrisburg Young Professionals) includes open seating, cash bar, buffet dinner and dessert, plus a one-year AAH Membership (a $40 value).

Goodwill Industries will have a contribution bin in the Bal registration area. Guests are encouraged to bring along clothing and small items to donate.

Info: Art Association of Harrisburg at 717-236-1432 or order tickets online at www.artassocofhbg.com.

AIDS book, now movie, wins award

American author David France has won Britain's leading nonfiction literary award with a book about the activists who fought the AIDS crisis in the 1980s and 90s.

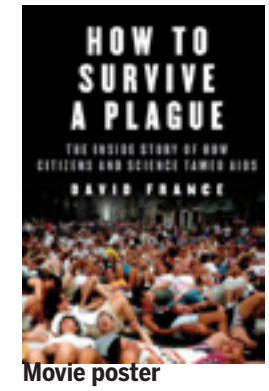
"How to Survive a Plague" was awarded the 30,000-pound ($40,000) Baillie Gifford Prize at a ceremony Thursday in London.

The book recounts how grassroots groups such as ACT UP pushed the government medical establishment to develop treatments for the deadly new disease.

Last May France told *The Central Voice:*

"Our history is important," David France tells Central Voice. With many from the AIDS Generation missing, "there's been a gap between Baby Boomers and Millennials and the telling of our stories," he points out.

Book cover



Movie poster

How to Survive a Plague, first a documentary movie and now a backstory book, France fills in the gap by telling how LGBT Americans organized to fight the spread of AIDS—and the contempt of the government and medical establishments. The film was an Oscar finalist, won a Directors Guild Award and a Peabody Award, and was nominated for two Emmys.

France called it "a witness account of the plague years of the AIDS epidemic … where there was no effective medical treatment for an HIV infection and death was almost certain."

The book is a follow-up to France's Academy Award-nominated 2012 documentary of the same name.

Formerly the Samuel Johnson Prize, the award recognizes nonfiction English-language books from any country.

Start your search for great reading

During the new year, think of your library system for finding titles that cover a wide range of topics. Whether it be a sampling from the short-listed titles for the Lambda Literary awards, or works that help you realize your goals for 2018, The library is the place to start your search for great reading.

Dauphin County Library Book Reviews

By Yvonne Carmichael

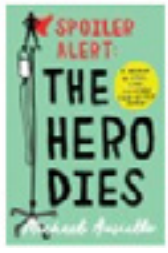
Design Your Day: Be More Productive, Set Better Goals, And Live Life On Purpose by Claire Diaz-Ortiz.

"In Design Your Day, productivity guru Claire Diaz-Ortiz introduces the Do Less Method, a productivity and goal-setting model that will help you do more in less time and succeed more often. When it comes to productivity, hard work is half of the battle. The first half—the crucial half—is planning well, and that's what Claire helps you do, from start to finish. From the big-picture to minutia, Claire walks you through every step of setting and achieving smart goals. . . When you take back your time and use it strategically, you'll be amazed at everything you can accomplish."

Logical Family: A Memoir by Armistead Maupin.

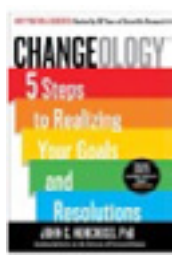
"In this long-awaited memoir, the beloved author of the bestselling Tales of the City series chronicles his odyssey from the old South to freewheeling San Francisco, and his evolution from curious youth to ground-breaking writer and gay rights pioneer. Born in the mid-twentieth century and raised in the heart of conservative North Carolina, Armistead Maupin lost his virginity to another man "on the very spot where the first shots of the Civil War were fired." Realizing that the South was too small for him, this son of a traditional lawyer packed his earthly belongings into his Opel GT (including a beloved portrait of a Confederate ancestor), and took to the road in search of adventure. It was a journey that would lead him from a homoerotic Navy initiation ceremony in the jungles of Vietnam to that strangest of strange lands: San Francisco in the early 1970s. Reflecting on the profound impact those closest to him have had on his life, Maupin shares his candid search for his "logical family," the people he could call his own. . . What emerges is an illuminating portrait of the man who depicted the liberation and evolution of America's queer community over the last four decades with honesty and compassion--and inspired millions to claim their own lives."

Spoiler Alert: The Hero Dies: A Memoir of Love, Loss, and Other Four Letter Words by Michael Ausiello.



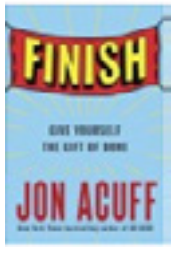
"Few memoirs balance dark, snarky humor with devastating, heart-wrenching candor as well as Michael Ausiello's Spoiler Alert: The Hero Dies. This loving but clear-eyed chronicle of his 14-year relationship with his husband, Kit, centers on their final year together after Kit is diagnosed with a rare, aggressive neuroendocrine cancer. On the day the couple wed at City Hall, they get the shattering news that Kit's cancer is Stage 4 and his life expectancy is about a year. Kit's chemotherapy starts three days later. Soon the duo is coping with the new realities of living with a terminal illness and navigating conflicting medical opinions, medical mishaps, surgeries, pain management, remissions and slow decline. Woven between the memoir's main thread--the duo's epic cancer battle--are flashbacks to the couple's courtship, vacations, struggles, infidelities, therapy and unshakable devotion. The chapter detailing Kit's final days packs such an emotional punch because Ausiello has made readers fall in love with Kit, their relationship and their extended family and friends. Ausiello, founder and editor-in-chief of TVLine.com, has written a remarkable, perceptive, poignant and openhearted memoir about the fragility of relationships and health--and the hidden strength people find during hard times. Spoiler Alert: The Hero Dies is a haunting and profoundly sad story, but it›s brightened by witty writing, comedic interludes and the two charismatic, endearing and appealing heroes at the book›s center."

Changeology: 5 Steps To Realizing Your Goals And Resolutions by John C. Norcross.



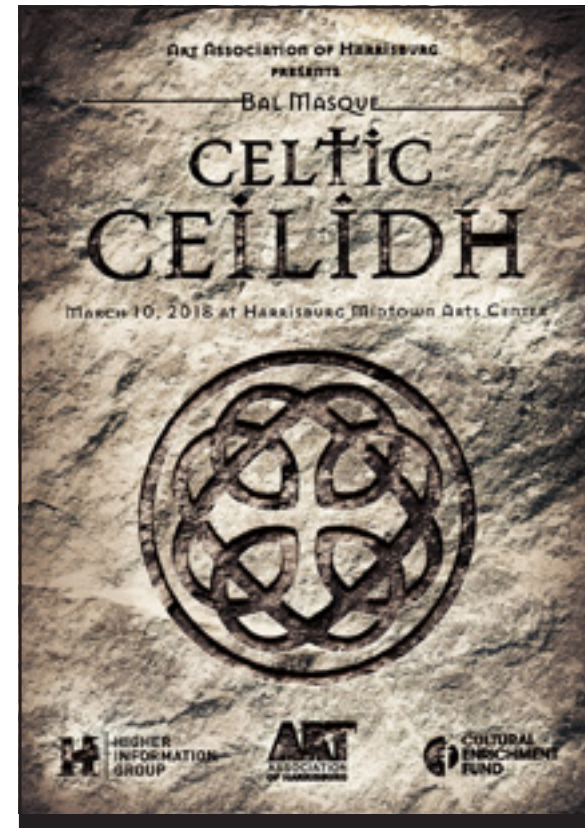
"Change is hard. But not if you know the five-step formula that works whether you're trying to stop smoking or start recycling. Dr John C. Norcross, an internationally recognized expert, has studied how people make transformative, permanent changes in their lives. Unlike the overwhelming majority of self-help books, the 'Changeology' plan has a documented track record of success. Whether you want to quit overeating or drinking, or end depression, debt, and relationship distress, Dr Norcross gives you the tools you need to change within 90 days. Changeology shows you how to define your goals, pump up your motivation, prevent relapses, and master the skills that will help you sustain change."

Finish: Give Yourself the Gift of Done by Jon Acuff.



"The sneakiest obstacle to meeting your goals is not laziness, but perfectionism. We're our own worst critics, and if it looks like we're not going to do something right, we prefer not to do it at all. That's why we're most likely to quit on day two, "the day after perfect"--when our results almost always underperform our aspirations."

Thanks to NoveList, Shelf Awareness and Ingram for description and review content.



The Art Association is calling together the Clans of Central PA in celebration and goodwill, for a Celtic Ceilidh on Saturday, March 10th, at Harrisburg Midtown Arts Centre!

Reservations are $150 for Lairds & Ladies, $100 for Clanfolk & $50 for Outlanders (1ST-TIME BAL ATTENDEES & CLAN HYP MEMBERS).

Celtic buffet, live music and DJ for dancing, live and silent auctions, costume parade!

Visit artassocofhbg.com to make reservations!

AAH Upcoming Events:

FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING EXHIBITION
Jan. 12th-Feb. 15th; Opening Reception: Jan. 12th, 5-8 pm

"SUSPENDED SPACES" EXHIBITION
Opening Reception Feb. 23th, 5-8 pm; Running through Mar. 29th

"AS WE REMEMBER"
Holocaust commemoration by Virginia Parkum & Jose Johnson through paintings, poetry & jazz, Feb. 25th, 2 pm

"I'm here to help you."

The Central Voice Account Executive Chris Thomas's goal is to help your business acheive it's goals for 2018.

Contact him @ 717-919-1394 or email ChrisThomas@pressandjournal.com

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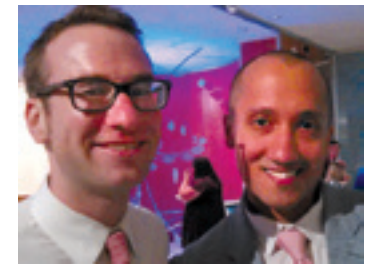
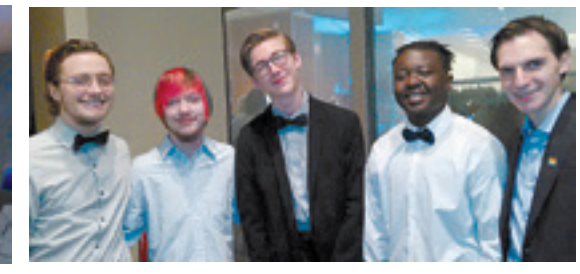
OUT & ABOUT

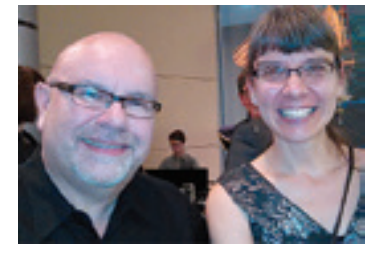
COMMUNITY EVENTS HELD AROUND THE STATE

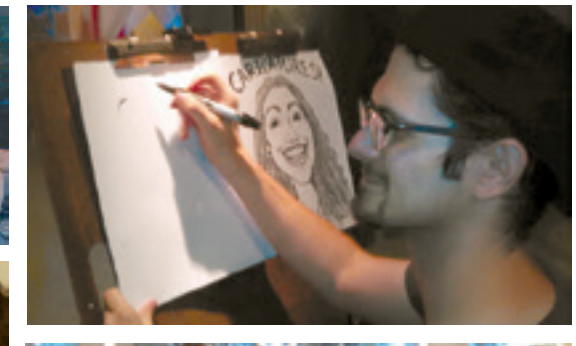
2017 FAB a hit!

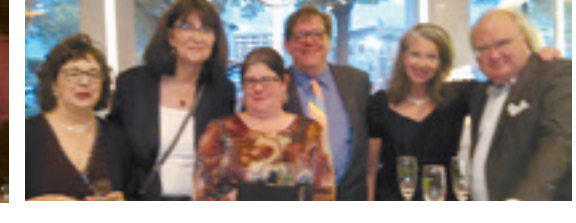
About 100 people gathered November 3, 2017 for the annual Fall Achievement Benefit (FAB), a fundraiser for the region's LGBT Community Center. The event raises funds for the center and honors the work of individuals, institutions, and organizations. The Central Voice has served as a proud Media Sponsor for many consecutive years. The Central Voice Account Executive Chris Thomas (center, photo below) thoroughly enjoyed his first time attending the gala.











Supreme Court nixes employment discrimination case appeal

The U.S. Supreme Court announced on Dec. 11, 2017 it will not review the Lambda Legal case on behalf of Jameka Evans, a Savannah, Georgia security guard who was harassed at work and forced from her job because she is a lesbian.

"The public is on the right side of history, and it's unfortunate that the Supreme Court has refused to join us."

Greg Nevins, Employment Fairness Project Director for Lambda Legal

"By declining to hear this case, the Supreme Court is delaying the inevitable and leaving a split in the circuits that will cause confusion across the country," said Greg Nevins, Employment Fairness Project Director for Lambda Legal. "But this was not a "no" but a "not yet," and rest assured that Lambda Legal will continue the fight, circuit by circuit as necessary, to establish that the Civil Rights Act prohibits sexual orientation discrimination.

The vast majority of Americans believe that LGBT people should be treated equally in the workplace. The public is on the right side of history; it's unfortunate that the Supreme Court has refused to join us today, but we will continue to invite them to do the right thing and end this hurtful balkanization of the right of LGBT people to be out at work."

"This term will not see the Supreme Court provide a national remedy to stop the pervasive discrimination against LGBT people in the workplace. But don't despair; if you have experienced discrimination in the workplace, please contact Lambda Legal's Help Desk," said Nevins. "We urge Congress to pass a federal law explicitly banning discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation and gender identity."

Several federal courts have affirmed the argument that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, when properly understood, protects LGBT employees. Most notably, the full Seventh Circuit overruled four of its precedents and ruled in April that Lambda Legal client Kimberly Hively could proceed under the Civil Rights Act with her claim that Indiana-based Ivy Tech Community College discriminated against her because she is a lesbian. In September, Lambda Legal argued before the full Second Circuit, which is reexamining two of its precedents in Zarda v. Altitude Express, the case of a New York skydiving instructor who was fired from his job because he was gay. No ruling has been issued yet in Zarda.

In April of 2015, Evans filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia against her former employer, Georgia Regional Hospital, arguing that the hospital violated Title VII of the Civil Rights Act by discriminating against her because of her sexual orientation and her nonconformity with gender norms of appearance and demeanor. The district court dismissed the case.

In January of last year, Lambda Legal filed an appeal on Evans' behalf, arguing that she must have her day in court, citing rulings by several federal district courts and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) finding that sexual orientation discrimination is a form of sex discrimination and thereby a prohibited employment practice.

On March 10, 2017, a three-judge panel of the Eleventh Circuit held that it was compelled by a 1979 ruling to reject Evans' sexual orientation discrimination claim. Lambda Legal asked the whole court to rehear the case so that it could reexamine the 1979 precedent, but unlike the Seventh Circuit and Second Circuit, the full Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals declined to rehear the case on July 6. Citing a clear conflict among the circuits, Lambda Legal filed a petition asking the U.S. Supreme Court to review the case. Today, the Supreme Court denied review.

Read the petition: https://www.lambdalegal.org/in-court/legal-docs/us_evans_20170907_petition-scotus

Get your power on

Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center was joined by representatives from PPL Foundation and LGBT Tech to cut the ribbon for its new Cyber Center. The opening of the cyber center formally launches the new PowerOn Allentown program.

The Cyber Center was opened with a $5,000 grant from PPL Foundation as well as technology donations from LGBT Tech. This new space makes it possible for the organization to offer resume clinics, healthcare and Medicare enrollment assistance, youth writing workshops, and computer classes for older adults, as well as drop-in internet access for youth through The Center's daily youth program, Project SILK Lehigh Valley.

The launch also includes the opening of PowerOn Allentown, which allows LGBT youth to earn free technology such as laptops, tablets, mobile phones, solar chargers, and USB drives. PowerOn is a national program developed to support LGBTQ individuals gain access to technology and the Internet who otherwise may not have access. The PowerOn program is supported nationally by Straight But Not Narrow, Human I-T, The Trevor Project and operated fiscally by the LGBT Technology Institute. The partnership with Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center makes Allentown the 5th PowerOn location in the U.S., following sites in DC, Brooklyn, Atlanta, and Ft. Lauderdale.

"We know that in 2017, technology is no longer a luxury. Our new Cyber Center and PowerOn Allentown programs mean that our community has increased access to the resources they need," said Adrian Shanker, Executive Director, Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center.

HERE FOR 2018:

LGBT GUIDE

CENTRAL PA'S COMPLETE LGBT DIRECTORY

CONTACT: Chris Thomas, LGBT GUIDE Account Representative
717-919-1394 or email ChrisThomas@pressandjournal.com

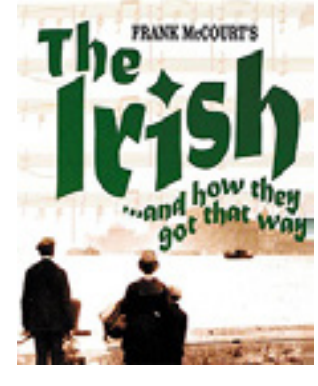
Live performances slated for January and February

GOD OF CARNAGE
January 19 - 28, 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Theatre Harrisburg
Krevsky Production Center

Winner of the 2009 Tony Award for best play. A full-length comedy with serious dramatic moments that follows two sets of parents as they work through the aftermath of an altercation between their eleven-year-old boys.

The Vagina Monologues by Eve Ensler Feb. 2-4, 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
Open State of Harrisburg

The Vagina Monologues is an episodic play written by Eve Ensler which developed and premiered at HERE Arts Center and was followed by an Off-Broadway run in 1996 at Westside Theatre. The play delves into consensual and nonconsensual sexual experiences, body image, genital mutilation, direct and indirect encounters with reproduction, sex work, and several other topics through the eyes of women with various ages, races, sexualities, and other differences. Box office- 717-232-6736



The Irish and How They Got That Way
Jan. 23 – Feb. 18
Fulton Theatre

The Tell Studio Theatre will be turned into a working Irish pub for this jovial musical. Everyone knows about "The Irish." They're the people who live life to the fullest – indulging lustily in good song and good humor (and sometimes even raising a glass or two). So what's so great about being Irish? Find out in this moving, uplifting, eye-opening musical history lesson full of charm and a bit of blarney. Don't miss this raucous celebration of all things Irish! Box office - 717-397-7425

REPORT OVERVIEW:

Intimate partner violence in LGBT & HIV-Affected communities

By Louie Marven

The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) released its report Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and HIV-Affected Intimate Partner Violence in 2016. The report looks at the experiences of 2,032 survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) who reported to 14 NCAVP member organizations from 9 states across the country, including California, Texas, New York, Arizona, Illinois, Massachusetts, Ohio, Vermont, and Missouri.

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a serious yet oft-ignored issue facing LGBT and HIV-affected communities. The 2016 National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) report looks at the unique and intersectional ways that LGBT and HIV-affected people experience IPV, as well as the barriers they experience when attempting to access care and support. Key findings include:

·LGBT and HIV-affected people of color made up 60% of the reports of IPV homicides, and 59% of the total number of survivors who reported to NCAVP members in 2016.

·There was an increase in the percentage of survivors who identified as Latinx from 24% in 2015 to 30% in 2016.

·LGBTQ and HIV-affected people under the age of 40 made up 73% of the reports of IPV homicides, and 66% of the total number of survivors who reported to NCAVP members in 2016.

·Survivors reporting experiencing sexual violence within IPV increased from 4% in 2015 to 7% in 2016.

· Transgender women were 2.5 times more likely to be stalked, 2.5 times more likely to experience financial violence, and 2 times more likely to experience online harassment within IPV, compared to survivors who were not transgender women.

·Both transgender and gender non-conforming survivors and Latinx survivors were 3 times more likely to experience violence by an ex-partner.

· The most common services sought by LGBTQ survivors of IPV were legal, housing and mental health advocacy, safety planning and emergency funds.

The findings of this report are being released in a political climate where rights and protections for LGBT people are in jeopardy. "NCAVP's report shows a greater need than ever to understand the unique ways LGBTQ and HIV-affected communities experience IPV, and to reach our communities with vital information, resources, and services," said Beverly Tillery, Executive Director of the New York City Anti-Violence Project. "Yet LGBT people's legal rights and protections are being eroded daily by the Trump administration only making LGBTQ communities more vulnerable to violence."

THREAT FROM WITHIN: Intimate partner violence

From page 1

even anonymously. As pointed out in the report:

NCAVP's data may omit populations such as incarcerated people, people in rural communities, people who may not know about their local NCAVP member organization, people where the closest NCAVP member organization is too far away to reach, people who are not out as LGBTQ or as living with HIV, people who are not comfortable with reporting, and people who face other barriers to accessing services or reporting.

Note the important difference between intimate partner violence and sexual violence, which are distinct but may overlap. Intimate partner violence has to do with harm done to a person by a partner or ex-partner. It may be sexual, but it could also be physical, financial, emotional, or otherwise violent. Sexual violence, on the other hand, may include rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment–regardless of whether or not the perpetrator is or was an intimate partner.

It bears repeating that this report from the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) deals with intimate partner violence experienced in 2016 by people who are LGBTQ and/or HIV-affected. This is not a report of sexual violence (except for sexual violence where an intimate partner is the abuser), or hate crimes; NCAVP does work in those areas as well, just not in this report.

One key finding includes that there were fifteen reports of IPV related homicides of LGBTQ people in 2016. In eleven of these, the victims were younger than age 40, and in ten of the cases, the victims were killed by a current partner. (Four were killed by an ex-partner, and one was killed by police responding to an intimate partner violence incident.) LGBTQ and HIV-affected survivors of intimate partner violence most commonly reported cases of physical violence (19%), verbal harassment (18%), threats and intimidation (11%), isolation (9%), and online harassment (6%).

NCAVP also tracked the types of services sought by survivors:

The most common services that LGBTQ survivors sought were advocacy related, such as legal advocacy (25%), housing advocacy (17%), and mental health advocacy (14%). Other services that survivors sought were safety planning (59%) and emergency funds 12%. In 2016, 12% of survivors attempted to access emergency shelter. Additionally, only 33% of survivors reported seeking a protective order as a remedial service for IPV.

LGBTQ survivors of intimate partner violence may face the unfair dilemma of choosing between community and safety; for example, staying away from LGBTQ community spaces to avoid interacting with an abusive ex-partner. This isolation can delay healing, and put individuals at risk of factors associated with isolation like substance abuse and mental health concerns.

My observation from facilitating programs in the local LGBTQ community is that there is a real need for talking about healthy relationships at all ages, especially with young people. Due to social disconnection, LGBTQ youth experience a number of risk factors associated with dating violence, ranging from substance abuse to mental health concerns, as well as social rejection, which is often directly associated with disclosure of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Intimate partner violence has to do with harm done to a person by a partner or ex-partner. It may be sexual, but it could also be physical, financial, emotional, or otherwise violent. Sexual violence, on the other hand, may include rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment–regardless of whether or not the perpetrator is or was an intimate partner.

LGBTQ youth in dating relationships face similar challenges as their non-LGBTQ peers, but also face some unique challenges. These may include partners using the threat of "outing" to maintain control; challenges in accessing help because of internalized shame, fear of harassment, or lack of legal protections; and lack of access to models of healthy relationships. Young LGBTQ people encounter a number of barriers in accessing safe spaces to have these conversations. While LGBTQ youth experiences remain under-researched, there are some valuable resources that shed light on school climate for LGBTQ students in middle and high schools and colleges. This research demonstrates, among other findings, that LGBTQ students experience bullying and harassment at alarming rates, especially compared to their non-LGBTQ peers.

How can we have conversations about healthy relationships? LGBTQ people and characters are more prevalent in mass media than ever before, which presents both opportunities and challenges. While LGBTQ youth may be more able to see people like them in news and entertainment, diversity within this representation is not always a given. We should encourage critical thinking around what kinds of LGBTQ identities and experiences are demonstrated in media, and what's missing.

When we do get around to having these rare opportunities to model healthy dating relationships, the models are typically limited to gender-normative gay or lesbian couples. What does it mean for bisexual people to be in a healthy dating relationship? What about transgender people? The invisibility of LGBTQ models for healthy relationships is pervasive enough that we need to be committed to modeling multiple LGBTQ experiences in meeting this need.

LGBTQ youth often do not grow up in households headed by LGBTQ parents, so the skills associated with navigating the world in the face of challenges like discrimination, harassment, and cultural invisibility associated with these identities are often not observed over the course of childhood. A community is an opportunity to meet this need! We should create and participate in intergenerational LGBTQ spaces to talk, envision, and enact the kind of community that we want and need.

These are just a few ideas for creating the kind of community that fosters healthy relationships instead of violent ones. We need to keep asking questions like:

What would it look like if we didn't these barriers?

How can we foster accountability?

How can we share power and dismantle hierarchy?

We don't have to wait for someone else to change the system and send us the memo. Instead we can be what we need for each other - in other words, a community.

On being an LGBTQIAAA+ ally

Ally in the Academy

By Trum Simmons

What does it mean to be an ally to folks on the LGBTQIAAA+ spectrum? What is the role of the ally in supporting those on the spectrum?

I've been an active ally for many years, beginning in the early 70s, and I'd like to share some of my experiences through the decades. This is only my experience, and there is no one way to be an ally, although some general principles can be extrapolated.

In the 70s I was married to a woman who was active in The National Organization for Women (NOW), and my first serious work as an ally was to support the lesbian contingent of that group.

My then wife came home with all kinds of information and stories about the struggles that lesbians and cis (straight) women were having in developing policy and strategy in that part of the feminist movement.

What a learning experience for both of us! Talking with lesbians about their life experiences was eye-opening, not to mention rather stressful in the conversations about how they felt marginalized by some of NOW's straight leadership.

"What does it mean to be a good ally? Have I been one? I believe so, but I have also made many mistakes along the way. I've had many lessons to learn."

As many of you know, I taught at HACC for 40-plus years, and the first HACC student who came out to me did so in 1980. He wanted to talk about his life and how he felt being a minority at the college. This was back in the day, so he didn't want to come out to the class, nor did he want to write about his experience in the student newspaper, called *The Fourth Estate (TFE)*.

As the 80s progressed, *TFE* covered LGBTQ issues extensively and we had a couple of gay staff members who wrote about their experiences. Of course, with Jerry Falwell and his Moral Majority in the national news, we had a lot of opportunities to do so.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic also offered many opportunities to talk about what it meant to be gay at HACC and in the U.S. in general. We covered the South-Central AIDS Assistant Network (SCAAN), interviewing men diagnosed with HIV/AIDS who were glad to help educate the campus about their health challenges.

Fast forward to the 90s, when the first LGBT student organization was approved by HACC's student government. The Pink Triangle was approved by a vote of 9-3-3 (3 abstentions), and I began to advise the group a couple of years later.

I advised that group for some 15 years (it became ALLIES eventually), and its first president was a trans woman. That same woman, Alberta Hamm (known to many *Central Voice* readers), ran for and became the student government president in 2003, and we have been close friends ever since.

In 2000 I developed the HACC Humanities course Introduction to Lesbian and Gay Studies, and have taught it ever since. The class has always had a mix of LGBTQ+ people as well as cis straight allies, and in class discussions over the years we have all learned so much from one another.

As an elder at Market Square Presbyterian Church in Harrisburg, I was on the committee that made sure we added the words "sexual orientation" to the church mission statement, which says that we welcome everyone, no matter who they are.

These are some of my experiences as an ally to everyone on the LGBTQ spectrum, and I have been fortunate to have a career in a community college, or as I like to call it, the people's college. I've been fortunate to have a wide circle of diverse friends in the central Pennsylvania area. I know I've been blessed.

I've always followed local, state and national news, and not just because I was a student journalist and journalism professor. I believe all citizens need to know what is going on around them, both at the immediate and national level. Reading about LGBTQ issues in our communities should make everyone an ally.

What does it mean to be a good ally? Have I been one? I believe so, but I have also made many mistakes along the way. I've had many lessons to learn.

As I said earlier, there is no one way to be an ally, but there are certain components we can identify. Allies need to know what's going on, for starters. We need to become educated about LGBTQ issues, which include understanding the ongoing systemic oppression of people on the spectrum and that not everyone experiences oppression in the same way.

We need to take risks. We need to be vulnerable, because sometimes we try too hard to be helpful and end up not being so.

Most of all, allies have to be there for our LGBTQ sisters and brothers. We need to have their back. All people need someone who has their back, because being fully human means being empathetic and caring for all our fellow humans.

Trum Simmons is a professor at Harrisburg Area Community College.

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Where is it dangerous to be out?

We'll never really know for sure how many LGBT+ people there are living in the world. But if we apply the common assumption that at least 5% of the population is gay, then it's safe to say we have at least 350 million LGBT+ brothers and sisters living on this insignificant rock of ours.

More than a third of the 196 countries recognized on this planet consider homosexuality illegal. If we live in a global village, what is life really like for our neighbors?

First let's start with the countries that offer rights to LGBT+ people.

Full legal rights and marriage equality – year same-sex marriage was achieved *(in dark green on the map).*

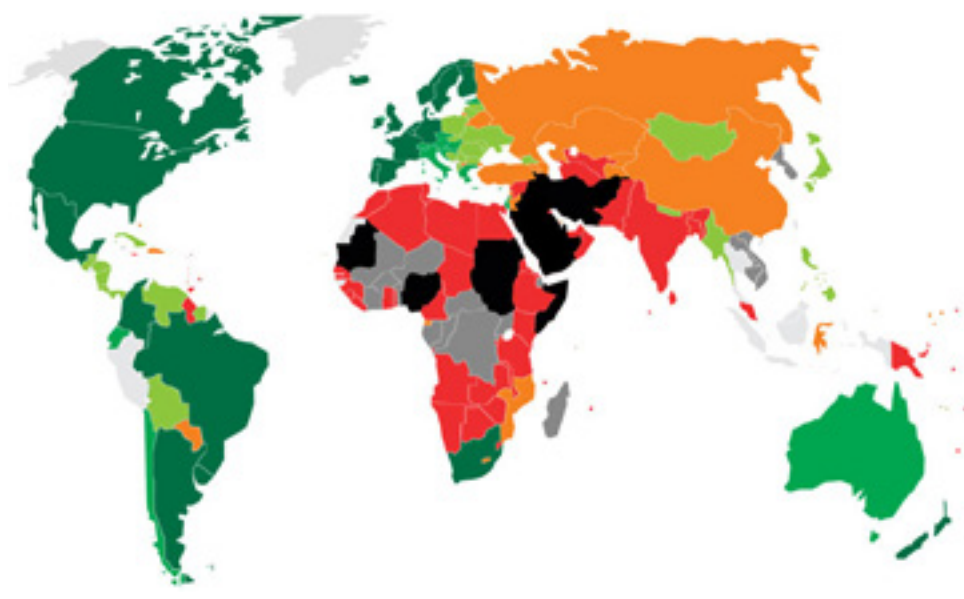
Netherlands (2001), Belgium (2003), Canada (2005), Spain (2005), South Africa (2006), Norway (2009), Sweden (2009), Portugal (2010), Iceland (2010), Argentina (2010), France (2013), Uruguay (2013), New Zealand (2013), Brazil (2013), United Kingdom (not Northern Ireland) (2014), Ireland (2015), Luxembourg (2015), United States (2015), Mexico (2016), Denmark (2016), Colombia (2016), Germany (2017), Finland (2017), Malta (2017).

Civil partnerships and some legal rights *(in mid green on the map).*

Chile, Ecuador, Cyprus, Israel, Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Switzerland, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Australia.

Homosexuality with protections written into law *(in light green on the map).*

Cape Verde, Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Cuba, Bolivia, Surinam, Venezuela, Georgia, Nepal, Japan, Mongolia, Philippines, Thailand, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Moldova, Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Serbia, Monaco, Fiji, Vanuatu.



Legal *(in orange on the map).*

Equatorial Guinea, Seychelles, Lesotho, Mozambique, DominicanRepublic, Haiti, Paraguay, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Abkhazia, Armenia, Azerbaijan*, Russia, Turkey, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, China, Indonesia, Macedonia*, Bahamas*, Belarus, Vatican City, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau.

*Allowed to serve openly in the military but no protections written into law.

However, as we all know in some countries it's still very dangerous for our LGBT+ brothers and sisters to live freely and openly.

No laws for or against homosexuality *(in grey on the map).*

Benin, Burkina, Cote D'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Rwanda, Djibouti, Madagascar, North Korea, South Korea, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Uganda.

Homosexuality illegal – maximum number of years in prison that can be sentenced *(in red on the map).*

India (life), Gambia (life), Ghana (life), Tanzania (life), Sierra Leone (life), Barbados (life), Guyana (life), Bangladesh (life), Trinidad and Tobago (25), Malaysia (20), Egypt (17), Antigua and Barbuda (15), Kenya (14), Malawi (14), Zambia (14), United Emirate State (14), Papua New Guinea (14), Tuvalu (14), Solomon Islands (14), Kiribati (14), Nigeria (Northern Nigeria Protectorate and Southern Nigeria Protectorate) (14), South Sudan (10), Ethiopia (10), Dominica (10), Granada (10), Jamaica (10), Saint Kitts and Nevis (10), Saint Lucia (10), Sri Lanka (10), Tonga (10), Zimbabwe (10), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (10), Botswana (7), Samoa (7), Qatar (7), Kuwait (6), Cameroon (5), Senegal (5), Comoros (5), Mauritius (5), Libya (4), Morocco (3), Togo (3), Uzbekistan (3), Guinea (3), Eritrea (3), Oman (3), Syria (3), Tunisia (3), Algeria (2), Burundi (2), Turkmenistan (2), Pakistan (2), Liberia (1), Bhutan (1), Maldives (whipping for 20 strokes), Angola (fine and restrictions), Chad, Namibia, Swaziland.

Death penalty for homosexuality *(in black on the map).*

Sudan (for a third conviction), Mauritania (Muslim men only), Nigeria (where the northern states have adopted Sharia law), Qatar (Muslims only, for extramarital-sex regardless of the gender of the participants), Somalia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, Afghanistan (in territory controlled by Al-Qaeda).

Countries in light grey.

No accurate information at time of print.

As we've seen far too often in 2017, LGBT+ people across the world are still under attack for simply being themselves.

We all need to be aware of the countries that continue to persecute our community so we can act through protest, aid, and urging our establishments and mainstream media to hold these outdated attitudes to account.

You can use your voice on social media, be selective with your next holiday destination, and continue to support LGBT+ people across the globe.

Re-Voice: Will India reverse anti-gay law?

Salman Rushdie said in a recent interview with *The Central Voice* publisher and editor Frank Pizzoli:

In India, this terrible thing happened. Under a previous government [in 2009], homosexuality was legalized, decriminalized. Many gay people came out and they lived normal lives at last. And now this new government came in, and the Indian high court has effectively recriminalized homosexuality [by not recognizing the 2009 decriminalization decision]. So that now homosexuality is, once again, illegal in India. Now all those people who came out are, in theory, at risk. That's a very bad situation. Writers have had conversations about and have written about their own sexual orientation. Now they are now asking: can I expect a knock on the door because I am openly gay? I think it's pretty difficult.

Today, there is optimism in India that the law outlawing homosexuality may be overturned. The New Delhi Times reports that there is renewed optimism that a recent Supreme Court ruling has paved the way to overturn an archaic law that criminalizes gay sex.

The battle to do away with the colonial era law has taken a tortuous route. Scrapped in 2009 by the Delhi High Court, it was reinstated in 2013 by the Supreme Court, dealing a massive blow to gay rights. At that time the top court said it was up to the legislature to change the law, but it has since agreed to review that ruling.

The full interview is available at glreview.com.

Gay rights activists and their supporters hold colorful balloons and placards as they participate in a gay pride parade in New Delhi, India, on November 12, 2017.

Ask me about my sexual orientation

Health professionals in England are to be told to ask patients aged 16 or over about their sexual orientation, under new National Health Service guidelines.

NHS England said no-one would be forced to answer the question but recording the data would ensure that "no patient is discriminated against," according to the BBC.

The guidance applies to doctors and nurses, as well as local councils responsible for adult social care.

A spokeswoman said: "It will have no impact on the care [people] receive."

She added: "All health bodies and local authorities with responsibility for adult social care are required under the Equality Act to ensure that no patient is discriminated against."

She said the information would help NHS bodies comply with equality legislation by "consistently collecting, only where relevant, personal details of patients such as race, sex and sexual orientation."

But the Family Doctor Association said it was "potentially intrusive and offensive" for GPs to monitor people's sexuality.

Chairman Dr. Peter Swinyard told the BBC that for older patients in particular, sexuality "doesn't affect health outcomes or care".

He said that GPs tend to know patients' sexuality, or would ask, if it was relevant to their medical condition.

For example, patients at a sexual health clinic are likely to be asked, but not those attending a wart clinic.

Under the guidance, health professionals are to ask patients: "Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?".

The options include heterosexual or straight, gay or lesbian, bisexual, other sexual orientation, not sure, not stated and not known.

NHS England said lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people were "disproportionately affected" by health inequalities such as poor mental health and a higher risk of self-harm and suicide.

It said public bodies had a legal obligation to pay regard to the needs of LGB people under the Equality Act 2010.

Paul Martin, chief executive of Manchester's LGBT Foundation, which worked with NHS England and others to develop sexual orientation monitoring, said he was "so proud" of the new standard.

He said earlier this week: "If we're not counted, we don't count."

The launch of sexual orientation monitoring was a "hugely important step in the right direction" towards addressing LGB inequality in health and social care, he said.

Former Conservative education secretary Nicky Morgan said that "what looks good on paper... actually when translated into real life becomes very intrusive". She told ITV's Peston: "Could it be appropriate in some circumstances about some conditions or problems that people come to see their doctors about?

"But clearly (for) the majority you wonder why on earth they need to know."

the Central Voice
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Integrity Central PA works for inclusion of LGBT community

By Central Voice

Michael Taylor

Central Voice: Tell us about yourself.

Michael Taylor: I grew up in the Harrisburg area and recently left State government after a career in information technology. I started going to the Episcopal Church a few years ago, after reading that the Anglican Communion in England had sanctioned the Episcopal Church in America because it approved the marriage of same sex individuals within the church. The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in America stood his ground and refused to reverse the decision because it was the right thing to do. He was demonstrating the very meaning of the word 'integrity', which means being true to who you say you are and willing to act on it.

CV: Tell us about Integrity Central PA.

MT: Integrity of Central PA is a new chapter of Integrity USA. The local chapter is now in formation and already has more than a dozen members. Integrity is a nonprofit organization of LGBT Episcopalians and our straight friends.

Since its founding in 1974, Integrity USA has been working for the full inclusion of LGBT persons in the Episcopal Church through its various activities in congregational life, education, and advocacy. Our local chapter will continue this work. Integrity envisions a church where people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions are welcomed and affirmed.

CV: Why do you belong to Integrity Central PA?

MT: A group of us wanted to do what we could to build LGBT community within the Episcopal Church in central Pennsylvania. So we decided to start a chapter of Integrity in this area (there had been one in State College a number of years ago). Bishop Audrey Scanlan, of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania, fully supported us in this effort.

Some people think that now that marriage equality has been upheld in the courts, there is less need for organizations like Integrity. I believe that now is not the time to become complacent and stop working for equality. The gains that have been made in recent years can just as quickly be undone. For example, President Trump has already tried to reverse the policies for transgendered individuals in the military. On the state level, there still is no statewide prohibition of discrimination against persons in the LGBT community.

CV: How do you get out the word?

MT: One of the programs that Integrity is promoting, which I feel very strongly about, is called "Believe Out Loud". The program works with local Episcopal congregations to be placed on a national registry of Welcoming and Affirming Episcopal churches.

The parish is asked to develop a Welcome Statement explicitly addressed to everyone regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. This process must involve discussion and input from the entire congregation. It is then published in some public manner, usually on the parish website. The parish may also decide to display the Rainbow Flag if they choose.

I am pleased to say that two area parishes have recently been added to the registry, Saint Luke's, Mechanicsburg, and Saint Stephen's Cathedral, Harrisburg.

Info: IntegrityCentralPA@gmail.com or Facebook

End Religious-Based Bullying

Faith in America & The Tyler Clementi Foundation join forces

The Tyler Clementi Foundation's Mitchell Gold, co-founder and co-chair of Faith in America, and Jane Clementi, co-founder and co-chair of the Tyler Clementi Foundation, announced that their organizations will be joining forces to work together to end religious-based bullying.

Gold said:

"Faith in America was founded in 2006 to educate the public about the ongoing harm caused to LGBTQ people, especially youth, by faith-based discrimination. In the early years, leaders and funders in our own LGBTQ communities worked against us because they felt the truthful word "bigotry" was too strident. Many thought we could achieve full equality by avoiding religious issues entirely. Despite this resistance, Faith in America grew through donors and supporters who shared heartbreaking experiences of faith-based discrimination, organized around the inspiring vision of a world where religious denominations no longer teach that homosexuality is a sin.

"The Tyler Clementi Foundation has become a critical partner in achieving this vision. Jane Clementi has a powerful voice as a mother and person of deep faith. And now with Jason Cianciotto as its new executive director, The Tyler Clementi Foundation will become an even stronger and more impactful leader. Faith in America wants to be a part of that. By joining forces and using precious community resources more strategically and efficiently, we can hit the grand slam needed to end faith-based discrimination."

Faith in America is a nonprofit organization that seeks to end harmful anti-LGBT religious teachings by directly engaging and informing religious leaders about the real harm they cause. We are directly calling upon all religious denominations to once and for all end the practice of teaching that "homosexuality is a sin."

Info: faithinamerica.org

USDA issues 'religious advisory' allowing anti-LGBTQ speech

By Bil Browning
LGBT Nation

The United States Department of Agriculture has posted a "religious advisory" on their website that amounts to a blatant license to discriminate against LGBTQ people. In fact, it's so specific the only topics specifically mentioned in the memo are "same-sex marriage, gender identity, and sexual morality."

The Trump administration has systematically tried to destroy nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ people throughout the government. Within hours of his inauguration, websites were being scrubbed of all mentions of LGBTQ rights.

The website's Q&A about "First Amendment and Religious Beliefs" asks the question, "Does the Secretary's First Amendment Policy encompass speech regarding same-sex marriage, gender identity, and sexual morality?"

Opinions about same-sex marriage, gender identity, and sexual morality are all matters of public importance. Moreover, people often have different perspectives on these topics, which are sometimes informed by their religious beliefs, and feel the need to discuss them. USDA respects the First Amendment rights of USDA personnel, as well as non-USDA personnel working at facilities inspected by USDA, to share their varying viewpoints on these topics, whether through oral discussion, the display or distribution of literature, or other means.

Last month, the Department of Justice filed a brief that sided with an anti-gay baker and argued that states do not have the same interest in fighting antigay discrimination that they have fighting racial discrimination. The Solicitor General has petitioned for time to argue the case in front of the Supreme Court.

Since Trump's inauguration, the White House website has removed reference to LGBT issues and policies from the previous administration, and reversed an Obama-era executive order permitting trans students to use school facilities most closely aligning with their gender identities.

Trump's Attorney General, Jeff Sessions, reversed an Obama-era policy that protected trans employees from discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Trump has also attempted to ban transgender people from the military, but a federal judge put that order on hold.

"If the USDA wants to create workplaces where employees can bring their best selves to work, that means protecting all employees – including LGBTQ people – from discrimination, not placing targets on the backs of marginalized communities," said Sarah Kate Ellis, President and CEO of GLAAD.

"This new policy is a solution in search of a problem and can be used as a license to discriminate against others. From the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Justice, up to the Oval Office, President Trump and his administration are working around the clock to dismantle LGBTQ workplace protections and promote their agenda of hate."

Let's talk individuality

Making Sense of Life

By Dr. Terry Drew Karanen

Are you comfortable "being yourself?" This may seem like a silly question. Who else would we be if we aren't being ourselves? And yet, do you occasionally second-guess yourself about what you want to do or when you desire to say certain things around particular people? This month's column is the end of our five-part series on self-care and one of my personal favorites: Individuality.

Can think of a time you acted exactly the way you wanted to act, or said precisely what was on your mind? How did that work for you? I hope it went well. Honesty is sorely lacking in our world today. At the very least were you honored for your individualized actions or words? That's not always the case, particularly if we are bucking the norm.

Over the course of my life I've been criticized for acting outside the box. Can you relate? I often do or say something that others around me want to do or are thinking about saying, but are afraid to follow through with because of what others might say. I believe the people who life "full-out," and seem happy doing so, are those who act from a space of love. They are not afraid to acknowledge the power they have at their disposal. In other words, we can be outrageous by the standard of society and get little to no flack about it as long as we are not doing it just for the sake of being noticed. We might even get admired – think of how Lady Gaga and other celebrities have been accepted, no matter how outrageous. (I still haven't gotten over the meat dress.)

"...we can be outrageous by the standard of society and get little to no flack about it as long as we are not doing it just for the sake of being noticed."

I remember years ago being just about ready to walk out the door when my boyfriend asked, "You're not going out in THAT, are you?" (Okay, granted, it was the 80s and I wouldn't be caught DEAD wearing that today if I still had it, which I don't, but I digress…) I gave him a blank stare. I've always that a good comeback when someone asks me a stupid question.

He followed his original query with, "What makes you think you can wear that?" My answer, again with a blank stare was, "Because I can!" Admittedly, I "may" have had a slight bit of attitude in the delivery, and I "suspect" I may have raised at least one eyebrow when responding. At his height he'd never have been able to pull off an over-sized, turquoise shirt with tails and a gold, metallic vest. (I warned you. I was the 80s …)

Levity aside, you'll probably admit that the opinions of others may have very well stopped you from doing what you wanted to do at some point. You might not have even suspected a particular person, but were afraid of some kind of reprisal or criticism about your appearance, conduct, or idea.

There are lots of reasons why we let people stop us from doing things. We think we're too old, or too young; not good enough; untrained; inexperienced; or, playing out of our league. But each of us has a particular gift in the way we live life and express ourselves. Abraham Maslov is quoted as saying:

No great deed, private or public, has ever been undertaken in a bliss of certainty.

If we wait around to live our lives until we have everyone's approval the only thing being said will be, "S/He looks so natural lying there in that beautiful coffin." Seriously. It's completely impossible – or at the very least highly unlikely – that everything we say or do will be universally accepted. Someone will want to correct us. Another person may want to tweak our delivery. Yet others may be diametrically opposed to our actions, and make their opinions known in unpleasant or uncomfortable ways.

The flip side to that coin is that without you being you – truly, unabashedly, perhaps irreverently, and most certainly individually you – the universe will be lacking. That's a lot of responsibility, which I know you can handle. You may have a gift that you're holding back on sharing. There could be an idea you want to put forward, something innovative, unique, and perhaps deal-breaking. You might even be thinking of something along these lines right now. Go for it!

It's time to up the ante on being you. We don't have to be outrageous for the sake of being outrageous. In fact, sometimes being ourselves may mean that we are calm when others are excited. Give us the pleasure of seeing you for the unique and magnificent expression of Spirit in human form. We need you … just as you are!

Terry is an author, speaker, licensed social worker and flight attendant. Read his regular blog at Central Voice online or on his website at: blog.terrydrewkaranen.com. He is also the director of Spirit, Mind and Body Foundation (spiritmindbodyfoundation.org).

Helicopters and helpers

While fatal shootings spiked in November in the city of Harrisburg, the violence came amid a year of substantially reduced homicides.

The capital city logged four homicides in November, including the high-profile shooting deaths of two sisters, making it the deadliest month this year. The last time the city recorded that many killings in one month was August of 2016.

But even with the violent uptick from this November, the city's homicide tally so far this year is 11, compared to 16 homicides at the same time last year and 18 homicides at the same time in 2015.

Holiday months can be bad for violent crime for reasons police don't fully understand, said Police Chief Thomas Carter.

"There seem to be more robberies, with people trying to get fast money," Carter said.

The deadliest months last year were July and August, with four killings each. But in 2015, the deadliest month again was November with four killings.

To try to reduce violent crime, Carter said police have focused specifically this year on taking guns off the street in a collaboration with the ATF. As of Nov. 20, police had confiscated 284 guns this year, said police Capt. Gabriel Olivera.

By Frank Pizzoli

Last October regional media outlets reported that Harrisburg's Allison Hill had helicopters buzzing above its streets. Police Capt. Olivera tweeted "This is just one of those many things we have done ... just more visible." Proactive policing.

A bullet-point summary of Allison Hill would include –

- Historic neighborhoods, 6,000 residents
- 1/3 of residents under 18
- A recent jump in shootings
- Stunning architecture
- A United Nations of cultures

The Central Voice asked people who currently live, or who have lived, in Allison Hill to share their experiences. *(If anyone reading this story would like to share their experiences, please send an email to posops@aol.com.)*

CURRENT RESIDENT: Amanda Arbour

Allison Hill resident, Amanda Arbour, says she first came to the region to attend Messiah College. "Through my involvement with their service-learning center I got to know many individuals and organizations in Harrisburg - and particularly Allison Hill," she says.

She moved to The Hill eight years ago "because while the challenges of poverty, blight, and racism are very clear, it is also clear that there are so many dedicated people who have committed themselves to this neighborhood". She "wanted to be part of that - not with any illusions of 'saving' the neighborhood." Arbour recognized "both the beauty and the brokenness" and has "a desire to learn from and work with those who were already residents."

What has Arbour learned in her years as an Allison Hill resident?

"I have learned so much about the history of the neighborhood, which is critical to understanding the challenges that it faces today," she says.

"Allison Hill used to be a thriving neighborhood, but a combination of deindustrialization and white flight has forever changed the face of the neighborhood," Arbour points out. Like many urban areas, the local economy was heavily reliant on manufacturing. "All along the 17th Street Corridor you can still see remnants of what was a thriving economic center," she notes. "But when the factories started shutting down, moving to suburbs or overseas, the loss of those jobs was devastating," she says. Allison Hill is still struggling, like other hollowed out economic hubs, with a lack of employment opportunities.

Arbour says white flight was also a significant factor changing the Hill's composition, similar to larger city patterns. "Whether drivers were following jobs to suburbs, leaving in the wake of the race riots or the 1972 Agnes Flood, there was a huge exodus of white people who took their resources with them," Arbour notes.

"Learning this history, how deindustrialization shattered the Hill's economic core and how white flight took away resources and people has really helped me to better understand the context in which our current challenges operate," Arbour says.

What about stigma?

Arbour says, "There are rampant stereotypes and stigmas attached to living on the Hill."

She frequently defends her neighborhood to those with negative perceptions. When people find out she lives there "they get this stricken look on their faces and whisper, 'Do you feel safe there? Aren't you afraid of getting shot?'"

"No, I am not afraid of getting shot," Arbour says.

In the eight years she's lived on The Hill, she's "never had a major issue. You have to be careful no matter where you live, and while we may have higher rates of certain kinds of crimes, I am quick to remind people that we are also the most densely populated neighborhood in the city."

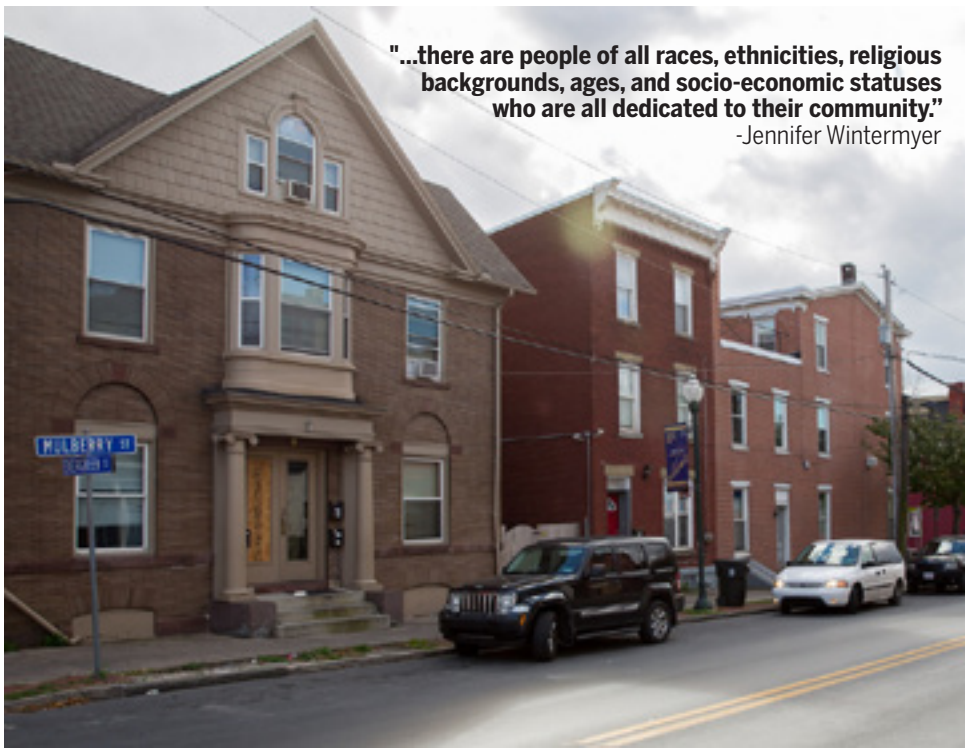
Her point is that when you have a lot of people concentrated in a small area, that influences crime rates.

"I urge people to be very careful about jumping to conclusions about someplace they have little or no personal experience with," Arbour says.

"We have many wonderful people, food, green spaces and art," she points out. She challenges people to "take some time to get to know the neighborhood and people, instead of buying into the stigmas and stereotypes."

What do residents of Allison Hill not know about people in other city neighborhoods?

Harrisburg is a small city and Arbour thinks "there can be tensions between neighborhoods...so people who live on the Hill might have a negative perception>



"...there are people of all races, ethnicities, religious backgrounds, ages, and socio-economic statuses who are all dedicated to their community."
-Jennifer Wintermyer

of Midtown or Uptown, and vice versa."

Why?

"I think it stems from a number of different things, including competition for resources, class and racial segregations, how the high schools used to be separated. Some of it is based on history and current realities, and some comes from stereotypes and assumptions," Arbour opines.

Allison Hill gets a bad rap most of the time, Arbour says, but she is "proud to live here, despite challenges of poverty, blight, and racism. This neighborhood and people are resilient - not giving up, but continuing to work every day to confront those challenges and make it a better place."

Arbour is executive director of the LGBT Community Center in Harrisburg.

FORMER RESIDENT: Brendan Cavanaugh

Former Allison Hill resident Brendan Cavanaugh was born in Pittsburgh and raised in Butler County. He studied graphic design at West Virginia Wesleyan. Cavanaugh had been a resident of the Hill for eight months.

"I am part of a Christian organization that moved to Harrisburg with a focus on worship, prayer, and doing outreach," Cavanaugh tells Central Voice.

He lived in Allison Hill doing community outreach for eight months until he got married but continued "with my outreach activity for little over two years after getting married," he says.

Allison Hill is not the place the media makes it out to be, Cavanaugh says.

"Sure, if you go looking for trouble, you're sure to find it. But I encountered beautiful and friendly people. A resilient community that stands together in hard times," he says.

Cavanaugh wants people to know that "Allison Hill is a beautiful community that has value, worth, and a destiny." He believes "that the tongue is something that speaks both life and death." He cautions people "to be careful about how we describe places. If you speak harshly, it'll be all you ever see. If you speak love and look for the gold inside a person or place, you're sure to find it."

Cavanaugh says that his most significant learning after living in Allison Hill is that "Tacos Mi Tierra and Tacos la Barca are the two BEST places to get tacos in the city."

AGENCY EXECUTIVE: Jennifer Wintermyer

Originally from the Youngstown, Ohio area, Jennifer Wintermyer is executive director, Tri County Community Action, located in Allison Hill since 1992. Having worked in the Pittsburgh region for many years, she is familiar with the "rust belt" and after moving here in 2011 she now lives in New Cumberland.

"I'm attracted to this neighborhood so much because it reminds me of some of the older neighborhoods back home. There is such a strong sense of community and belonging. There's a desire to rebuild but not replace its history," Wintermyer says. TCCA's understanding that "strong families need strong communities" attracted her to the agency.

One strength is that "residents come together by themselves, without agency or government prompting them to tackle tough issues," Wintermyer says. For example, Allison Hill has organized block watch groups, multiple resident associations, a strong faith-based community, and regular safety patrols throughout the neighborhood. "And they are working. In South Allison Hill, we've seen a 31% decline since 2013 in Part I Crimes (murder, robbery, burglary, assault, rape, theft).

"People living outside this neighborhood often have negative impressions of its safety," she says. "Crime is down, neighbors are rebuilding neighborhoods.

Pro-active policing and a diverse community signify Allison Hill's brokenness and beauty

Agreeing with Cavanaugh, "We have some of the best taco places around. Allison Hill is as friendly a neighborhood as any other in which I've lived or worked," Wintermyer says.

Like Arbour, Wintermyer says Allison Hill residents are "incredibly resilient, creative, motivated, and diverse." She points out there are people of all races, ethnicities, religious backgrounds, ages, and socio-economic statuses who are all dedicated to their community." Harrisburg residents living in other neighborhoods are not any different than Allison Hill residents, she observes.

Over 700 community members took part in the recent Heart of the Hill community planning process to develop community revitalization plans for their neighborhood, Wintermyer notes.

"I can easily name at least eight new small businesses that have opened here in the past three years, all locally-owned," Wintermyer says.

Each neighborhood has its own personality, its own challenges, and its own strengths Wintermyer says.

"I think Allison Hill residents have learned that only by unifying with each other can the entire city thrive.

Does it take a village?

Allison Hill, also known as The Hill, is a Harrisburg neighborhood located directly east of downtown Harrisburg. The Hill sits on a bluff overlooking downtown.

Shown above, students from Penn State, Shippensburg University and Columbia University working with the intergenerational Pride of the Neighborhood program to maintain green spaces around Allison Hill's Catholic Worker facility.

The Hill comprises many sub-neighborhoods with nicknames such as "The Ville" and the "Third Ward" and encompasses the Mount Pleasant Historic District. Architecture is brick, in Italianate, Victorian, or Colonial Revival styles.

Historically, some residents had beautiful gardens. So many people grew grapes that in the Fall, residents would shut down the streets and make wine. Many homes still have the same ancient grapevines in their backyards.

The neighborhood is also dotted with murals, some hidden and others placed in full view of the main roads. Sylvan Heights Mansion, which is now occupied by the YWCA, and serves as housing for homeless women and children who are victims of domestic violence, sits on the hill and overlooks downtown.

As of 2004, 6,003 people were living in Allison Hill. The majority are low income and one third are under the age of 18. The many cultures represented in Allison Hill include West African, Vietnamese, Indonesian, diverse Latin American, African-American, and European-American populations. The Hill is home to many businesspeople, artists, and social justice and community activists.

Understanding sexual harassment under the law

By Laurie T. Baulig, Esq.

Allegations of sexual harassment in the worlds of media, politics, and entertainment have dominated the headlines in recent weeks. But what exactly is sexual harassment, and how can employers avoid liability when an incident of harassment occurs?

First, sexual harassment is a form of illegal sex discrimination banned by a federal statute known as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The words "sexual harassment" do not appear in the statute, which simply states that employers cannot discriminate against an employee's terms and conditions of employment "because of" sex.

Rather, sexual harassment as a form of illegal sex discrimination has been established under decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court and regulations enforced by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. It is a topic that employers must take seriously or face significant liability. Having sexual harassment in the workplace can also lead to low morale, decreased productivity, and negative publicity that can tarnish a company's reputation. Just ask CBS and NBC.

For these reasons, it's important for company managers to know what sexual harassment is - and what it isn't. Let's start by looking at the text of the legal definition of sexual harassment:

"Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; or (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment."

Note the very first word of the definition is "unwelcome." In the Supreme Court decision establishing sexual harassment as a form of sex discrimination, a bank employee claimed her boss sexually harassed her even though she agreed to go out with him dozens of times. The bank argued that the teller's conduct was voluntary and that therefore the bank had no liability. The Supreme Court rejected that argument and stated that even if her conduct was voluntary, it was unwelcome.

Another reason the use of the word "unwelcome" is important is that it makes clear that whether something is sexual harassment or not is in the eye of the beholder or the recipient of the harassing conduct. That is, it is not a defense to a claim of sexual harassment that the harassment was unintentional. "I didn't mean it" or "I was only joking" just won't cut it. What matters is that the victim of the behavior perceives it as unwelcome.

Let's go back to the text of the definition. It identifies two different types of sexual harassment. Clause one and two describe a type of sexual harassment known as "quid pro quo" harassment which occurs when sexual favors are demanded in return for job opportunities, salary increases, preferred assignments, or other benefits. Quid pro quo is a Latin phrase that is translated as "this for that" or "something in exchange for something else."

"Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment..."

Quid pro quo harassment typically involves a supervisor's conduct toward a subordinate. The key here is that there is an imbalance of power in the relationship. A supervisor who tells an employee, "Have sex with me and the promotion is yours" would be an example of quid pro quo harassment.

For an employer to be held liable for a supervisor's sexual harassment, the supervisor must have taken a "tangible employment action" against the employee. A tangible employment action is a significant change in employment status or benefits, such as when an employee is fired, refused a promotion, demoted, or reassigned to a position with significantly different responsibilities.

Clause 3 describes "hostile environment" harassment, which occurs when, according to the Supreme Court, "the workplace is permeated with discriminatory intimidation, ridicule, and insult, that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the victim's employment and create an abusive working environment." This form of harassment typically involves co-workers and occurs when a pattern of sexually offensive conduct runs throughout the workplace and the employer has not taken steps to prevent or discourage it. The key here is that the conduct is so severe or pervasive that it alters the terms and conditions of the victim's employment.

Here's an example of harassment that may not be so obvious: Several years ago, female employees at CBS alleged that David Letterman gave preferred assignments to women who dated him. A hostile environment was experienced by employees - male and female - who did not go out with Letterman and therefore had less desirable assignments. So hostile environment harassment can be experienced by those who witness consensual sexual relationships in the workplace.

Employers are also liable for the sexually harassing conduct of vendors, customers, or clients. This is so-called third-party harassment.

So what can employers do to protect themselves from liability for sexual harassment?

The Supreme Court has made clear that in cases involving supervisor harassment, an employer will not face liability if two things can be shown: (1) the employer has established written policies and complaint procedures and acted promptly to correct the sexually harassing behavior; and (2) the complaining employee failed to take advantage of the employer's complaint procedures or other corrective opportunities provided by the employer.

What about hostile environment harassment? What are some things an employer can do to prevent this type of harassment in the workplace? The key thing is to provide training so that employees understand the employer's complaint procedures and are told that they must report the offensive conduct to the company. Employers must also act consistently with their policies - whether the alleged harasser is a lowly intern or the company's CEO - and make it clear that violation of the policy can lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment.

In no event can the employer retaliate against an employee who alleges sexual harassment has occurred. Retaliation is a separate violation of Title VII. In a retaliation claim, the employee asserts that he or she has suffered harm as a result of making a charge, testifying, or participating in a legal investigation or proceeding.

In short, employers must be proactive in preventing, detecting, and addressing sexual harassment in their workplaces. As a means of preventing harassment, many companies require all employees annually to take an on-line training course on sexual harassment. All complaints of sexual harassment must be taken seriously. And once sexual harassment occurs, companies must take swift action to punish the harasser, up to and including termination from employment.

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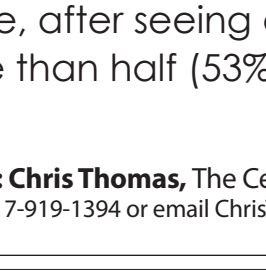
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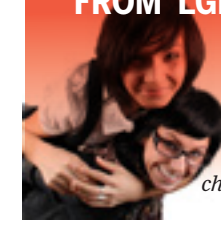
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